17-year-old admits role in Davao airport bombing

Story on PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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IN *Saturday* SPECIAL

- **Colin Farrell rings up US box-office honors**
- **'Frida' is Salma Hayek's cinematic labor of love**

GMA sparks SARS scare

The President announces first 'probable' SARS case minus confirmatory testing

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Armand N. Nocum

WE'RE back to being SARS-free.

That's President Macapagal-Arroyo declaring to the world the purported condition of the Philippines after having its first "probable SARS case" in a 64-year-old male foreigner who was supposedly likely infected during one of his regular trips to Hong Kong.

At her daily teleconference yesterday in Malacañang, the President said that the unnamed foreigner had been in isolation at an undisclosed hospital since April 1 and has been cured, but she wanted him confined for another week for observation.

She also said authorities had tracked the people the patient had been in contact with, and none of them had shown signs of sickness.

"So we're SARS-free again," she beamed.

It was unclear why the President saw fit to announce the case of the foreigner—a German, according to reliable sources.

The World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office in Manila had no information on the matter. Sought for comment later in the day, it said: "We are waiting for confirmation from the DOH (Department of Health)."

At the teleconference, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the patient never developed respiratory distress (or shortness of breath), a symptom of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

"He was to be discharged," the health secretary added. "He's already cured; he no longer has fever. But his stay in the hospital will be extended if only to make sure he's really cured."

One of the Philippines' top pulmonologists, who is familiar with the case, told the INQUIRER categorically that the patient did not have SARS.

"How did they confirm?" the pulmonologist said. "There's no confirmatory test for SARS. Before they open their big mouths and panic people, they have to be sure. And I tell you, this patient had

GMA/ A19

IN CONTROL but inconsistent, the President with Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit during a teleconference at the Palace says "we are free again" of SARS. Dayrit says the patient is cured and ready to be discharged on Friday. EDWIN BACASMAS

S'pore puts SARS suspects on camera

SINGAPORE has taken drastic measures to enforce quarantine orders on hundreds of people suspected of exposure to the SARS virus, including mounting "Webcams" in homes and threatening to use electronic wrist bands.

Those quarantined "will be called at random intervals daily and requested to turn on the camera and present themselves in front of the camera to show their presence," Singapore's Ministry of Health said Thursday.

In Hong Kong yesterday, a spokesperson for the Hospital Authority said a 55-year-old man suspected of SARS infection escaped early Wednesday from the Prince of Wales Hospital after being held in quarantine.

The man was caught by police on Thursday and returned to the hospital, one of the major outbreak centers of the deadly Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in the former British colony.

The SARS suspect escaped after demanding that the hospital release him so he could return to his home in Southern

SINGAPORE/ A20

Bedlam in Baghdad: Intense, massive looting

HOME is where the loot is. Two Iraqi women push a cart loaded to a whole sala set taken from a furniture store in Baghdad on Thursday. AP

THE WAR
DAY 23

BAGHDAD—United States forces in Iraq yesterday grappled with looting and civil disorder, scattered gun fights, the brutal murder of a Shi'ite religious leader in a holy shrine and a suicide bomb attack on Thursday, which shattered much of the euphoria that had marked the end of Saddam Hussein's rule.

In the absence of any government, shopkeepers in Baghdad began shooting at looters for the first time as the city plunged into chaos.

"We want the law to rule and if the Americans don't defend us then we'll defend ourselves with our own weapons," said one shopkeeper, Khazen Hussein.

Twenty-five people sustained gunshot wounds in looting-related clashes, hospital sources said, while the International Committee of the Red Cross said one of the city's hospitals was in a "chaotic and catastrophic" state.

US forces said their first priority had to be rooting out remaining resistance before tackling the difficult task of restoring order.

A correspondent reported seeing a fresh outbreak of intense looting in an area newly abandoned by non-Iraqi Arab paramilitary fighters. The Trade Ministry building was on fire, he added.

Looters carted off bottles of wine and whisky, guns and paintings of half-naked women on Thursday from the home of Uday, Saddam's feared playboy son. They also picked clean his yacht and made off with some of his white Arabian horses.

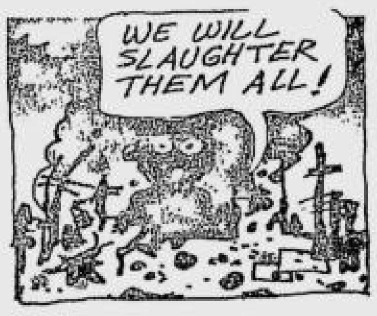
Severe looting has also raged in the southern city of Basra, now under the military control of British troops.

Hundreds of Iraqi civilians besieged the national headquarters of Iraq's military intelligence, searching for relatives they say had been detained there.

Aid officials said US and British troops were obliged by international law to prevent chaos.

"The picture is a very dark one. There

BEDLAM/ A18


WE WILL SLAUGHTER THEM ALL!

Sahaf morphs into a cyber star

LONDON/LOS ANGELES—He became a celebrity of the Iraq war with his outlandish denials and boundless optimism.

Now Iraq's Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf has become a star on the Internet.

Fans have set up a website dedicated to him, featuring his more outrageous quotes and a collage of photos.

In one of the great moments in

SAHAF/ A18

Amnesty Int'l 'shocked' by RP treatment of young offenders

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE PHILIPPINES has laws that protect the rights of children involved in crimes, but the country's authorities do not implement them adequately.

"We are shocked by the huge discrepancy between the youth justice system and that exercised in practice," the human rights group Amnesty International said in its report on the Philippines, "A different childhood: The apprehension and detention of child suspects and offenders."

AI noted how children are handcuffed upon arrest, put in cells for adult criminals and how some of them received prison sentences meant for adults.

"There are serious and widespread defects in the administration of juvenile justice in the Philippines that must be urgently addressed," AI said.

"We urge the Philippine government to ensure that child detainees are treated in accordance with international standards, and to immediately and im-

AMNESTY/ A19

Meralco's serious financial woes worry Palace

By Carlito Pablo

MERALCO, the country's largest power firm, now faces serious financial problems—and even Malacañang knows it.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye yesterday said the "long-term viability" of the Lopez family-controlled firm must be considered in determining how it will implement the refund ordered by the Supreme Court. But Bunye also repeated his previous statement that President Macapagal-Arroyo was committed to enforcing the landmark SC decision.

"We need to balance the decision of the Supreme Court with what is good for the long-term viability of Meralco," Bunye said over government-owned radio station dzRB. "This is important because Meralco supplies much of our electricity."

Bunye said that determining the mode of refund was the task of the Energy Regulatory Commission, now chaired by Manuel Sanchez, appointed by the President just days before the high court "denied with finality" Meralco's motion for reconsideration.

"It's very important that we keep the firm viable," Bunye said.

Noting that the ERC would have to determine the value of the refund and the length of time for repayment, Meralco spokesperson Elpi Cuna echoed Bunye.

MERALCO'S/ A19

Sale of 7 US properties in US to net ₱3.3 billion

By Jerry Esplanada

THE SIX-STORY building on East 66th St. in New York City called the Philippine Townhouse has gone through many ups and downs. Built in 1916, it was the site of many of Imelda Marcos' fabulous New York parties in the 1980s. By 1994, it had fallen into disuse.

A two-and-a-half-year renovation by Ada Ledesma-Mabilangan, wife of the former Permanent Representative to the UN, restored it to its former glory by 1997. Now this property owned by the Philippine government, for the past five years the official residence of the country's Permanent Representative to the UN, is about to go through a new low. It is about to be placed on the auction block.

Regency Capital Realty, a US firm, estimated the property's current fair market value at $17.5 million (about P960 million at an exchange rate of ₱55 to the dollar).

Ex-Sen. Francisco Tatad has described the proposed sale of the Philippine Townhouse and six other government-owned properties as a "desperate move" by the Macapagal administration.

"If it is to help pay for the budget deficit, *lumalabas na talagang kahiya-*

SALE/ A18

LIVING room on the 2nd floor of the 6-story building at 13-15 East 66th St. in New York City after its restoration in 1997 by the wife of the former Permanent Representative to the UN, Ada Ledesma-Mabilangan.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will continue to experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/12/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Youth owns Davao airport bombing

17-year-old says he did it for a shirt

By Anthony S. Allada and Ayan C. Mellejor
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—One of the five arrested suspects in the two recent bombings here has confessed to having carried the deadly explosives in the March 4 bombing of the Davao City Airport, investigators here said.

Seventeen-year-old Sammy (not his real name) and the four other suspects arrested in Cotabato City on Tuesday—Tohame Bagundang and Esmael Akmad, both of Kabuntalan, Maguindanao; Ismael Mamalangkas of Malagapas, Cotabato City and Ting Idar, of Matampay, Sultan Kudarat—were yesterday charged with multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder for the airport blast and the Sasa wharf bombing on April 2.

Sammy executed an extra-judicial confession on Thursday in which he claimed to have been the one who placed the backpack containing the explosives on an empty bench in the crowded waiting shed of the airport.

Top Moro Islamic Liberation Front leaders, including Salamat Hashim, Murad Ebrahim, Ghazali Jaafar and Eid Kabalu, were also included in the charges, along with more than 100 people, 30 of whom were identified only as John Does.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said the inclusion of the MILF in the charges was based on the admission of Mamalangkas and Akmad that they were active members of the MILF.

Investigators also claimed that the MILF had used Bagundang and Sammy in its bombing activities.

"This is a break. The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group has done a splendid job. But I am sad because not all of the respondents are in our custody," Duterte told the reporters here.

Also yesterday, state prosecutor Augusto Gonzales moved for the dismissal of the murder charges against Tirso Sudang and Undongan Sudang, both barangay officials of Kabacan, North Cotabato, the first set of suspects in the airport bombing.

Gonzales said there was insufficient evidence against the Sudangs who were arrested when they went to claim the body of a relative, 18-year-old Montasser, who died in the airport blast.

Police and military authorities said the Sudangs plotted the airport bombing and had sent Montasser to carry out the deed. The Sudangs said Montasser was at the airport to fetch a cousin who was returning from Egypt.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said he would talk to Duterte and request the Sudangs' release and also arrange for them to be compensated for their unjust arrest.

But in his affidavit, Sammy said he was never a member of the MILF nor did he belong to the rebel group's special urban terrorist action group (Sutag).

Bomb in backpack

Sammy, who is jobless and a resident of Cotabato City, said he was not aware that the backpack contained a bomb.

He said Bagundang, Akmad, Mamalangkas and Idar had convinced him to go with them to Davao City and promised to buy him a new shirt.

Besides looking forward to a new shirt, he agreed because he had never set foot in Davao City.

Sammy said he was taken by the group in a passenger jeepney to what he later learned was the airport. Akmad gave him the backpack and instructed him to place it in the waiting shed and leave right away.

He rushed back to the jeepney where the other suspects were waiting. A few minutes later, Sammy said he heard a loud explosion.

After eating, he said he and the suspects went into a grocery store to buy some items but there was no t-shirt.

The five then returned to Cotabato City. *With a report from Nico Alconaba, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Last of 4 Indon hostages freed

By Martin P. Marfil

THE LAST of four Indonesian hostages abducted by the Abu Sayyaf last year is free.

Military officials yesterday said the hostage, Pieter Lerrich, was found in Patikul, Sulu, after the Abu Sayyaf faction holding him abandoned him in Barangay Kadday Matullam.

Armed Forces vice chief of staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia said the Abu Sayyaf group holding Lerrich was spotted by elements of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 4 at around 11:30 a.m. yesterday.

The group scampered away when it sensed that government troops were nearby, leaving Lerrich behind, Garcia said.

Lerrich was recovered unharmed by a barangay captain who turned him over to the military. He was brought to 3rd Marine Brigade headquarters in Luuk, Sulu to be debriefed.

The victim is expected to be presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Associated Press and Agence France Presse, however, quoted Brig. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, deputy military chief for the southern Philippines, as saying Lerrich was rescued after the military raided the rebels' hideout in Patikul.

He said the rebels did not put up a fight but ran away.

Lerrich was one of four Indonesians seized from their tugboat by the Abu Sayyaf on June 17, 2002 off Basilan.

Two of the four managed to escape their captors at different times, while a third died in the crossfire when government troops engaged the Abu Sayyaf in one of their numerous encounters.

The Abu Sayyaf is still holding four women members of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect as well as Roland Ullah, the Filipino cook it abducted from a Sipadan, Malaysia resort in April 2000.

Lerrich will undergo a physical exam by military doctors but he appeared to be in good health, Tolentino said.

He said the authorities could not independently confirm the reported death of hostage Muntu Jacobos Winowatan, but rescuers found no evidence of his presence in the Abu Sayyaf hideout on Friday.

Indonesian Embassy spokes-person Triyogo Jatmiko told AFP: "It is a relief to hear Pieter is alive and well. We are grateful to the Philippine government and the military for this."

He said the embassy was awaiting confirmation from the Philippine government on the fate of Winowatan.

Troops were pursuing the guerrillas in the jungle, Tolentino said.

SC asked to extend freeze on 'dirty' money

By Clarissa Batino

THE ANTI-MONEY Laundering Council has asked the Supreme Court to extend its freeze order on P1.08 billion in bank accounts believed linked to criminal activities, including pyramid scams.

Otherwise, the funds corresponding to 29 cases related to money laundering, which are pending before the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court could disappear, the AMLC said.

The council, in a press statement, recalled that Section 12 of the amended Anti-Money Laundering Act provides that "existing freeze orders issued by the AMLC shall remain in force for a period of 30 days" after the law takes effect, unless extended by the Court of Appeals.

The law took effect on March 23, and the thirty-day period expires on April 22.

The AMLC, through the Office of the Solicitor General, also filed before the Supreme Court on April 3 "very urgent motions" to remand seven anti-money laundering cases to the Court of Appeals for resolution.

These cases had been pending before the high court on a petition for review on certiorari, questioning the appellate court's decision to dismiss them for lack of jurisdiction.

On April 4, the AMLC, again through the OSG, asked the Court of Appeals to determine the existence of probable cause for extending the freeze orders on the 29 cases.

Report vs Ping not credible, says Angara

By Cynthia D. Balana

OPPOSITION Sen. Edgardo Angara yesterday said the Senate committee report which recommended the filing of charges against Sen. Panfilo Lacson for alleged involvement in organized crime was not credible and was full of loopholes.

Angara, who issued a dissenting opinion on the report that was being routed to senators for their signature, said he concurred with Committee Report 66, except for some findings.

"A careful evaluation of the report would yield that it has no factual and legal bases to carry the weight of its conclusions. There is scant and insufficient evidence to reasonably link Senator Lacson to allegations of organized criminal activities," he said.

The committee on public order and illegal drugs, the lead committee in the inquiry, was about to release the report in June last year when the opposition staged a Senate coup to oust Senate President Franklin Drilon and effect changes in the chairmanship of the various committees.

Sen. Robert Barbers, chair of the committee on public order, and Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the blue ribbon committee, believed the coup was a minority ploy to preempt the release of the report and prevent Majority Leader Loren Legarda from including it in the calendar of business.

At the time, only pro-administration senators, who composed the majority in the Senate, had signed the report.

A copy of the report was leaked to the media but the report was temporarily shelved because of the disagreements between the two factions in the Senate as a result of the failed Senate coup.

Majority senators tried to resurrect the report early this year but the minority demanded that it be routed to opposition members in the three committees for signing.

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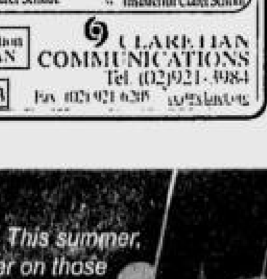

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BF's dual posts questioned anew

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SEVERAL congressmen are questioning anew the appointment of Bayan Fernando as concurrent chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority and acting public works secretary.

Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras, chair of the House committee on transportation and communications, said Fernando's dual position is clearly violative of the Constitution.

He said he, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay and three other congressmen will seek a formal House investigation into the appointment.

In their resolution, the congressmen asked the House justice and public works committees to investigate the "constitutional violation committed in the concurrent appointment" of Fernando.

They said that after Fernando was appointed MMDA chair last year, he "subsequently assumed and performed the functions of DPWH secretary without relinquishing his post as MMDA chair and he has in fact continued to discharge his duties as MMDA chair."

"(He) has since then been interchangeably referred to as secretary of DPWH and Chair of MMDA," they said.

They said it was a direct violation of the Constitution which states in Section 13, Article 7 that the "President, Vice President and members of the Cabinet and their deputies or assistants shall not, unless otherwise provided in this Constitution, hold any other office or employment during their tenure."

But more than the legality, the congressmen apparently has another beef with Fernando's handling of the DPWH.

"Since his appointment as acting DPWH secretary, his concentration has been in Metro Manila to the prejudice of the provinces. He has in fact caused the delay in so many local and foreign-funded projects," Paras said in an interview.

Paras said not only Fernando will be in peril if he persists in his illegal dual position.

"It may also open the President (Macapagal-Arroyo) to culpable violation of the Constitution," said Paras, a member of the ruling party Lakas.

He said the President cannot continue to not submit the names of Fernando and other Cabinet secretaries to the bicameral Commission on Appointments.

He said Fernando was named acting DPWH secretary only apparently to go around the constitutional prohibition on dual positions.

"He has to keep just one position otherwise he and his principals will be liable for flagrant violation of the Constitution," Paras said.

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Patis Tesoro lecture

DESIGNER Patis Tesoro will explore the history of the "Art of Philippine Embellishment" in a lecture today at 10 a.m. at the National Museum's Museum of the Filipino People at Rizal Park.

Tesoro's presentation will derive from her personal experience and vast store of knowledge as well as project visuals from the book she has written on the subject.

The lecture is part of the museum's 2003 lecture series on the theme "Of Collectors, Artists, Craftsmen and Objets d'art" co-sponsored by the Museum Foundation of the Philippines. Call Jing Pascual at 404 26 85 or Lerma Panuncio at 842 03 29 for further information.

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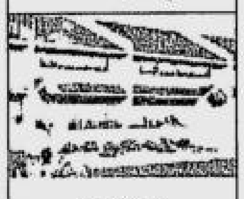

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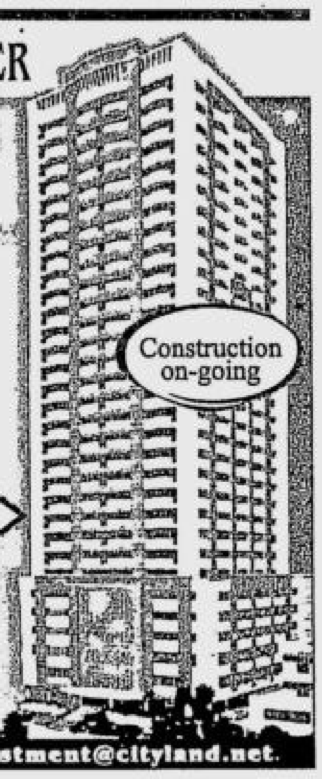

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'PRICE OF STATESMANSHIP'

No regrets, says GMA of low ratings

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said that she has no regrets about supporting the United States-led war against Iraq even as her popularity rating has plunged to negative 14 in a survey by the Social Weather Stations.

President Macapagal said that her actions may sometimes be misunderstood "but a leader must never hesitate to make a decision for fear of being misunderstood."

"I shall never allow public opinion to deter me from a rightful and moral course," the President said in a statement released by Malacañang yesterday morning.

The SWS said that based on its March 10-25 survey, Ms Macapagal endured a "very low" net satisfaction rating of negative 14, which it noted was lower than the "already meager" net positive 6 in November 2002.

In her statement, Ms Macapagal said that leaders like her have to "take blows for standing on principle."

"I have taken the blows often enough on many vital issues and I have no regret about decisions," she said.

Members of the House of Representatives expressed confidence that the public estimation of the Macapagal leadership would bounce back now that she was proven right in her support of the coalition offensive in Iraq.

For Rep. Leovigildo Banaag (NPC/Lakas, Agusan del Norte), "the President's firm stance on the Iraq crisis revealed her as less of a politician and more of a statesman, and placed her in the ranks of world leaders who took the difficult, unpopular road and were vindicated by the outcome of the war."

"The recent drop in the Social Weather Stations rating of the President was the price to pay for an unpopular, albeit accurate assessment of the Iraq issue," said Rep. Amado Espino (Lakas, Pangasinan). "Remember that the SWS polling period of March 10-25 was the height of anti-war anxiety over the safety of overseas workers, the exchange rate, the supply of oil and the prices of basic goods," he said.

"However, these fears proved unfounded and the President was vindicated," he said. He cited her track record in food and energy security, the peace negotiations, the capture of terrorists in Mindanao, and the prevention of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Espino added that the country must now address the challenges of agriculture productivity, revenue generation, infrastructure development, unemployment and poverty.

Other congressmen who expressed optimism regarding the President's future ratings were defense committee chair Prospero Pichay (Lakas, Surigao del Sur), housing committee chair Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City), accounts committee chair Robert "Ace" Barbers (Lakas, Surigao del Norte) and Rep. Willie Villarama (Aksiyon Demokratiko, Bulacan).

Barbers said the foreign affairs department is confident that a new, democratic Iraq would stabilize the Middle East and spur new growth in the world economy. In line with this, the DFA has vowed that Philippine economic diplomacy will go into high gear to ensure the Philippines a vital role in the rebuilding of Iraq, he said.

Pichay for his part said the rescue of the last Indonesian captive of the Abu Sayyaf augurs well for an improved peace and order situation in the country. He commended the Marines for the rescue and urged the military to step up its efforts versus terrorism.

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New Iraqi envoy to RP in 'limbo'

By Norman Bordadora

IRAQI Ambassador Faizal Hussein arrived here in February and has been waiting to present his credentials to President Macapagal-Arroyo, but developments in Iraq this week may mean he may never get to be recognized as Baghdad's representative here.

Once a new Iraqi government is formed in the wake of the United States-led coalition forces' victory against the Saddam Hussein regime, a new set of embassy personnel would be sent to Manila, Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said yesterday.

Hussein, charge d'affaires Samir Blus and two other diplomats in the Iraqi Embassy here would "fall into some kind of limbo," the foreign secretary said.

'Awkward'

Ople said the Department of Foreign Affairs continues to be in touch with the Iraqi diplomats at the embassy in Makati's Dasmariñas Village but admits that Saddam's fall has made dealing with the Iraqi envoys rather "awkward."

"One way of putting it is that we are still waiting for a new legitimate government in Iraq. Once the government is established, we will probably recognize it and the effect will be to disenfranchise the present crop of Iraqi officials in Manila," he said.

Asked if there was a possibility of Hussein getting accredited, Ople said: "We have to ask what government he represents."

"The Philippines is a sovereign state and it reserves the right to deal with foreign embassies according to its needs and requirements but also having in mind the law of nations. So it is an awkward situation right now," he said.

Hussein arrived in the country just two days after the embassy's second secretary Husham Hussain was expelled for allegedly plotting with local terrorists the bomb attack in Zamboanga City late last year.

He was able to call on Ople once but has yet to present his credentials to the President.

No credentials

The DFA has said that the delay in Hussein's presentation of credentials was caused by the Ms Macapagal's tight schedule.

Hussein's situation was compounded when the US State Department in March asked the governments of 60 countries to expel Iraqi diplomats who were allegedly acting as spies for Baghdad.

The US move was meant to pressure Saddam out of office just before the coalition attack on Iraq.

Shortly thereafter, the government expelled two more Iraqi diplomats. Ople said the diplomats were caught spying on US facilities just as US diplomatic officials here were preparing to celebrate Memorial Day in November 2002.

Ople denied that there was any connection between the latest expulsion and the US request.

2 fast-food outlets listed as erring taxpayer

By Clarissa S. Batino and Michelle V. Remo

TWO outlets of giant fast-food chains were added yesterday to the Bureau of Internal Revenue's list of erring taxpayers.

During a tax-mapping campaign in Quezon City yesterday, the bureau's raiding team found the McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets on Banaue Street violating a BIR policy.

Director Danilo Duncano of the BIR North QC district office said one cash machine at the McDonald's outlet and all eight at KFC were not duly registered with the bureau.

Duncano said the BIR would announce the total number of violators caught in yesterday's operation as soon as all reports were consolidated.

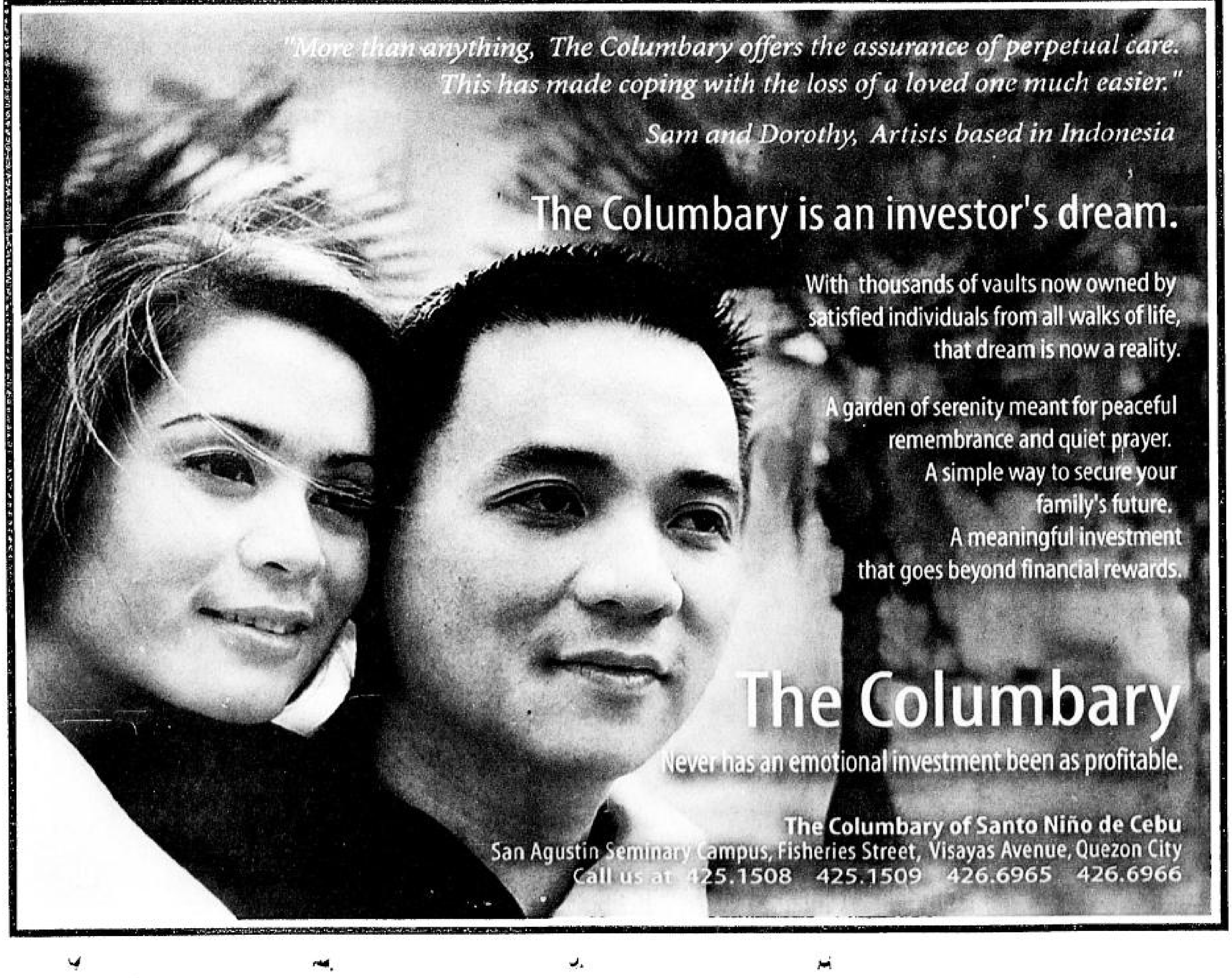
KFC-Banaue branch manager Dianne Tibor said management had merely failed to attach notices of registration to the machines. "The notices were delivered to us from our main office after the BIR personnel had left," Tibor said.

In a statement, McDonald's managing director Joseph Lau said the use of one unregistered cash machine in the Banaue branch was just an "oversight."

"McDonald's, for 22 years, has consistently paid taxes... in a punctual and accurate manner," Lau said. "We are now working with the BIR for (corrective) measures."

On Wednesday, more than 1,000 tax violators, including a Pilipinas Shell gasoline station in Las Piñas City, were snared in simultaneous raids along the Alabang-Zapote Road and in a commercial area in Caloocan City.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said this revealed a "massive and widespread violation of tax rules."



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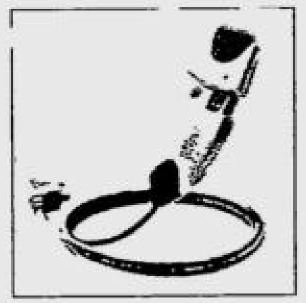
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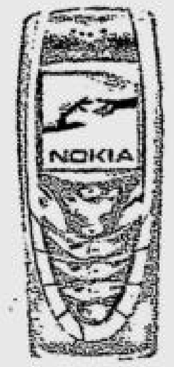
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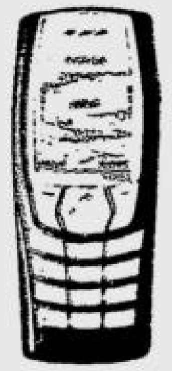
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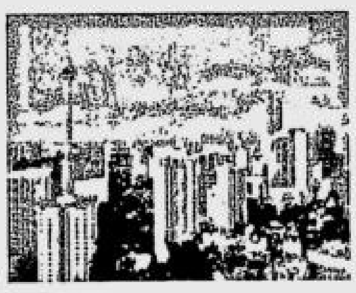
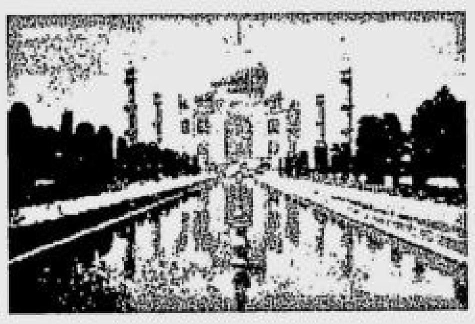
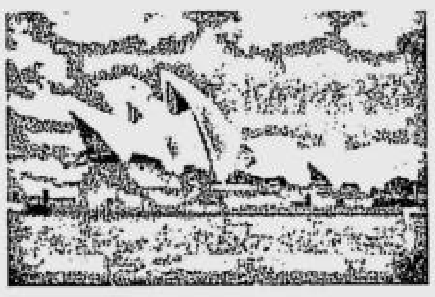
Malaysia , Singapore ,

India  and Australia 

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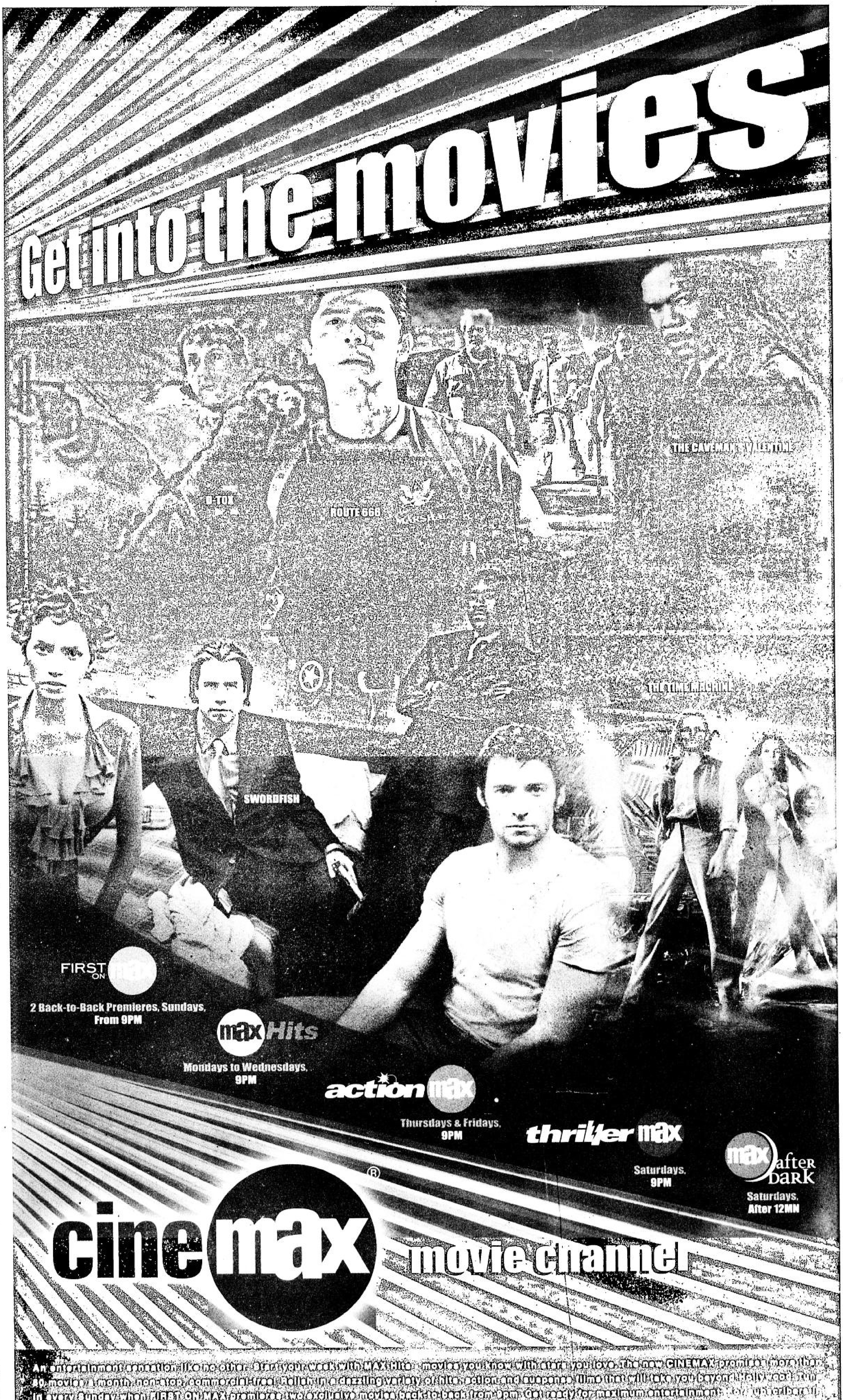
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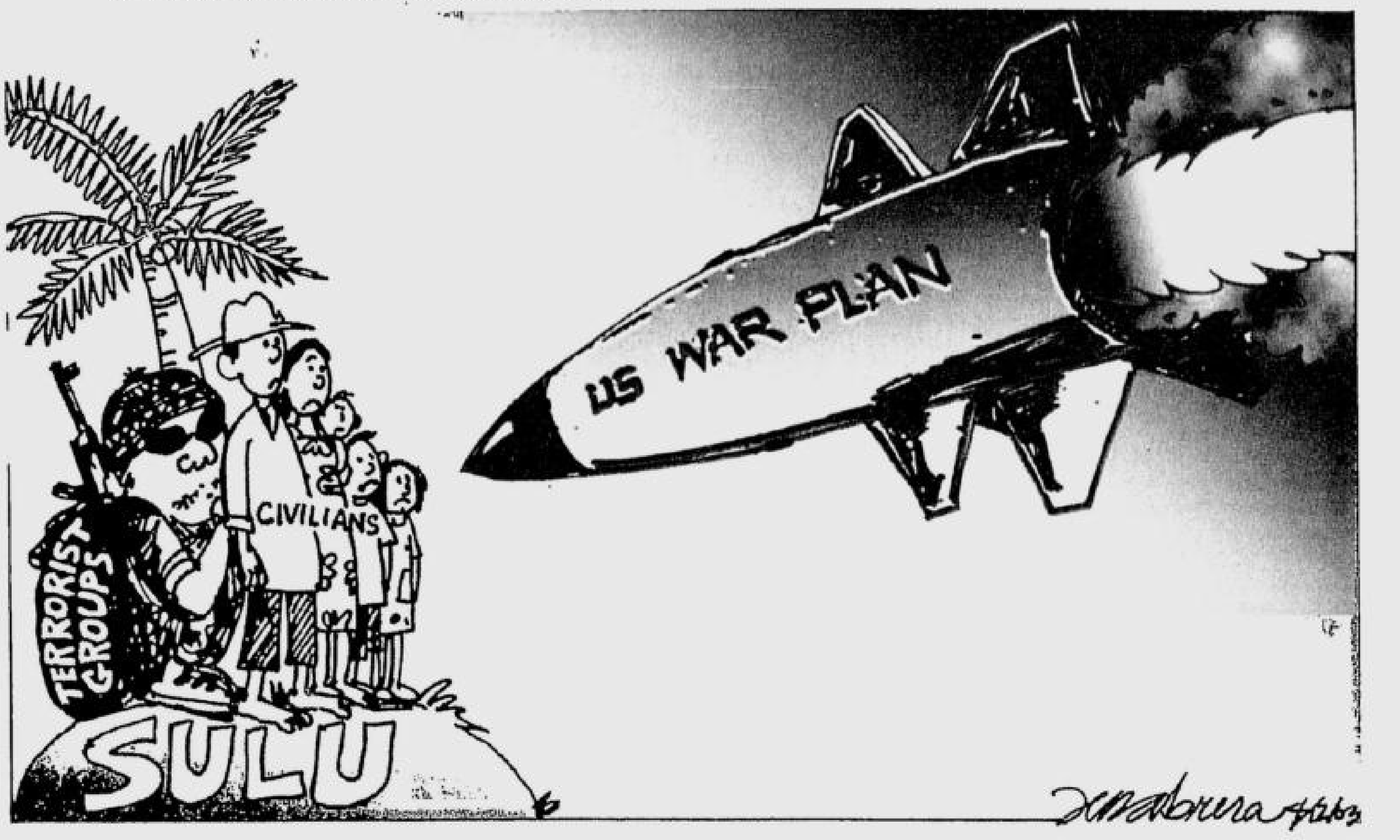

EDITORIALS

Crisis mismanagement

IN THE FACE of crises, there has been a busy show of strategic planning and management in the Macapagal administration. So must the nation rest content because the government has the situation under control? No, not when crisis after crisis breaks out, catching the government, which loves to proclaim to one and all that it is strategically prepared, flat-footed. Consider:

• After the bombings in Davao and Central Mindanao, President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte as crisis manager for the South and Central Mindanao. Considering that he is only a mayor, how can we expect Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato, for example, to take orders from him? Anyway Duterte did a poor job. He certainly had heard of the saying that lightning doesn't strike twice; but it's just that he forgot the other half of the saying—"in the same place." So the March 4 airport bombing was followed by the April 2 blast at the Sasa wharf. Both were "vital installations" Duterte's men were supposed to guard; it was just that they seemed to have gotten enamored of the stewardesses of the airport and repulsed by the smelly stewards at the wharf.

• Later Malacañang realized it had to fire somebody, so it fired the security chief of the Sasa wharf, with Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye saying as an afterthought that the same should have been done also with the Davao airport chief of security (no, he is not capable of irony). But if not Duterte, the Palace should have fired Isafp chief Col. Victor Corpus because the Sasa bombing was obviously a failure of intelligence. But it couldn't do so because Corpus knows a lot about Sen. Panfilo Lacson. Ask Ador Mawanay.

• National Security Adviser Roilo Golez came out with one of his facetious remarks that the fact that the bombings happened outside the main facilities should prove that security was really tight inside. Hello? Twenty-two people died and over 100 were injured at the airport waiting shed, while 16 died and 65 were hurt at the Sasa wharf. Perhaps Golez should include in Duterte's marching order not only "vital installations" but "vital parts." To be sure, vital organs lay splattered in the two sites that were bombed.

• But Golez has another bright idea. He has proposed the formation of a "homeland security agency," obviously a copy of George W. Bush's bright idea. (Come to think of it, Golez's portfolio is a copy of the American national security adviser, a position used by Henry Kissinger to pit himself against the secretary of state, whose post he coveted unabashedly.) Just asking: If we adopt Golez's idea, what are the police and the military supposed to do now?

Ah, but Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes wouldn't be outdone. He has proposed his own "internal defense security command." The nomenclature has changed but it's the same bureaucratic disease of creating an office for every imaginable need there is. For a career officer, Reyes seems ignorant that the PNP and AFP are in charge of internal defense and security—and they already have lots and lots of commanders and command centers. Obviously he wants more headless chickens to run around every time there's a crisis.

Crisis opportunism

REYES himself personifies what is wrong with the administration's mania for "strategic planning." In the wake of crisis after crisis, he has upgraded the status of the area coordinating centers (ACCs) so that they have become key facilities of different councils—for peace and order, for disaster coordination and for crisis management—that can be used during emergencies.

Many of these councils were creations of Fidel Ramos when he was defense secretary and became his excuse for meeting local officials when he was contemplating a run for the presidency. So is Reyes doing a Ramos? Ask his aides. Reyes has been inaugurating ACCs left and right. But are they effective in preempting or coping with crises? The answer is obvious if one goes by the crises breaking out left and right. At the very least, the ACCs are a mismanagement of resources because their facilities and equipment should have gone to the police, which is constitutionally mandated to take care of public safety and order and whose functions they duplicate.

So are "strategic planning" and "crisis management" the fig leaves to the banality of Philippine politics? As the adage goes, with crisis comes an opportunity. Nowadays, we not only have crisis managers, but crisis opportunists as well.

Unconscionable tuition fees

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

PARDON me for boasting a little, but I can't help reporting to my friends and readers of this column that my youngest child and only daughter Cynthia graduated last week with the degree of Master of Divinity (Biblical Studies) *summa cum laude*. Her mother and I are very proud and happy, as so are her brothers and cousins and aunts.

Candy had graduated years earlier from the UP College of Mass Communication with the degree of AB Journalism *cum laude*. But her latest academic triumph is much more impressive to me because she has become closer to God than when she was (although she finished her elementary and secondary studies at a Catholic school) not a fervent believer.

She has so far given me three copies of the Bible that I have not read on the various pretexts that I had read it many times before, that the type font was too small for my old eyes, and that I do my scriptural reading only during Holy Week. She has not given up on me and will probably tempt me with a more attractive illustrated version that I can read with my grandchild Cara, who is 8 years old.

The school where Cynthia obtained her master's degree is the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary located in Taytay, Rizal, removed from the hustle and bustle of Metro Manila. It has a wide campus conducive to meditation and study and close communion with nature. Its board of trustees is composed of educators form Australia, Melanesia, the United States, and various countries in Asia, including the Philippines. Its mostly foreign faculty has a member from our country.

We were especially touched when the relatives of the graduates were requested to rise as their particular graduate was called, and many foreigners in the audience rose with us to identify themselves with Candy. It's a really friendly community that recognizes no racial or geographical barriers but only an affinity of worship for Jesus as the Son of God.

Recognized by our government and other countries, APNTS has been operating in this country for the past 20 years. Cynthia is only the second of its hundreds of alumni to graduate *summa cum laude*. The students come from Korea, Japan, India, China, and other Asian countries. Many of them write their thanks to the unidentified sponsors who pay their tuition fees, their names and addresses in blank to be filled by their denomination leaders.

That said and having gratified my ego with your kind indulgence, let me now turn to the real and objective topic of this article.

Recognizing the value of education as a credential for personal success and responsible citizenship, our Constitution provides in its Art. XIV, Sec. 1 that "the State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

Yet, the alarming cost of present-day education in this country has made it a closed book to many citizens with native talents but little wherewithal to sharpen them with formal schooling.

Public schools do not cost much but are not generally regarded as efficient, except some state universities, notably the University of the Philippines. The UP represents the exception to the rule accepted before the Pacific War that the public schools were better than the private schools. Now the opposite is true. Public schools are no match for the private schools in the quality of education they offer and the facilities available to their students, like air-conditioned classrooms, well-stacked libraries, computers and laboratory equipment, along with better-paid and presumably more competent teachers. There is also the haughty attitude that enrollment in the public schools reveals financial limitations that some proud parents are reluctant to admit.

As a result, many middle-income parents are constrained to enroll their children in schools requiring tuition and other fees they can hardly afford. These fees run into the hundreds of thousands per schoolyear, and there are also the P100,000 bonds some schools demand as an additional price for acceptance. These bonds are reimbursable after the student's graduation or transfer but without interest for their use by the school in the meantime. The poor parents have to bite the bullet, to be consoled only by the award to their children of those lovely loyalty medals.

Congress should look into the excessive financial requirements of these so-called exclusive schools, which are open only to students whose parents have to pay through the nose for their children's benefit. Identification with these snobbish schools is also regarded as a foolish status symbol. The real beneficiaries of this heartless educational system are the schools themselves whose cupidity disdains the social values they are supposed to teach.

Significantly, the unconscionable tuition fees begin at the nursery, preparatory and kindergarten courses, completion of which is required for admission to grade school. This seems to me to be another form of educational blackmail. During our time, we began our studies in Grade 1, without all this kindergarten stuff, and we didn't do so bad either going through high school and college.

From Hamilton to Coelho

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

LAST week, Paulo Coelho's open letter to US President George W. Bush was reprinted in this column. This week, James Hamilton, in his open letter to Coelho, gives an opposing view of the war in Iraq.

"Mr. Paulo Coelho, best-selling and revered author:

"I am grateful for the hours of pleasure your fine fiction has given me, and of course I read with interest your open letter, 'Thank you, President Bush.' The chord you strike here, no doubt, resonates across the globe.

"Yet, Mr. Coelho, I wish to suggest that your latest effusion represents a serious missed opportunity, one that—given your influence and eminence—poses a risk to your tens of millions of readers.

"For your letter struck me, Mr. Coelho, as wildly discordant. Indeed, the very impulse of your misguided missive—your blind condemnation of the US president—called to mind another letter, one written just over a century ago in defense of another wrongly condemned man.

"Who was it, Mr. Coelho, who said that history repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce?

"With this in mind, I feel bound to remind you, Mr. Coelho, of some significant realities behind the current world tragedy.

"11 September 2001 did much more than incinerate 3,000 people of over 60 nationalities in New York and Washington (including several Brazilians).

"A profound change occurred in the entire world that day, Mr. Coelho. It started in Washington itself, where it was realized that new threats, long predicted by foreign policy experts had finally broken through to the top of 'risk assessment' and security agendas in the US and around the world.

"What was the result, Mr. Coelho? In essence, Washington no longer felt that it could depend on its long-term ally, the monarchy of Saudi Arabia, one of the keys to maintaining oil security in the world economy. The latter's involvement in the export of the extreme Wahhabi form of Islam, with its toxic consequences across the Muslim world and beyond, persuaded the US government that it should look elsewhere for a major Gulf oil exporter with whom to make a strategic partnership.

"And yes, Mr. Coelho, oil security **does** matter—not just to Texan drivers of sports utility vehicles (SUVs). A sustainable low-carbon economy (wind turbines, nuclear fusion technologies, hydrogen combustion/fuel cell engines) that could power the world economy is still decades away. In the interim, the US and its partners need a stable and secure source of oil.

"Mr. Coelho, I need not remind a writer of your great learning of the 1930s, another decade when desperate economic circumstances provoked extreme and terrible political solutions. But would those in whose name you claim to speak—the excluded, impoverished and marginalized majority of the world—benefit one iota from a repeat?

"With all this in mind, Mr. Coelho, I would like to invoke the example of a predecessor whose literary eminence is almost as stellar as your own, the author of that century-old letter of accusation: Emile Zola.

"*J'accuse!* The American people, from the Republican party, the state of Florida electoral officials, to their US Supreme Court, of irresponsibility in allowing the flawed and inexperienced George W. Bush to hold the most important office in the world. By permitting this very average man to hold high office, you have lost the chance to convince a skeptical world that regime change in Iraq will benefit everyone not blinded by hatred and prejudice. You have turned the United States of America from the indispensable to the unbearable nation.

"*J'accuse!* Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröeder of wrecking any hope for a multilateral solution to the Iraq crisis. Your populist anti-war stance comforts those wishing to turn back American global domination; but it offers no credible insight whatsoever into the clear and urgent challenges that the post-9/11 world faces. Moreover, by ignoring completely the 20 million Iraqi people who pray every night for their long nightmare to end, you betray yourselves as visionless and morally bankrupt. The world will not forget your attempt to build a common European foreign policy, on the back of the Iraqi people's endless suffering.

"*J'accuse!* You, Mr. Paulo Coelho, of touting cheap emotion and unthinking prejudice as reasoned analysis. Your self-satisfied pandering to the worst anti-American prejudices leaves your readers with a weaker understanding of the world we all must shape. Your letter is therefore, an act of gross irresponsibility.

"There are many, reasonable reasons to support regime change in Iraq. They remain ignored in your cosmically indulgent letter. If George W. Bush is maligned for trying where others dare not, his failure to convince is more than matched by your utter refusal to listen.

"Mr. Coelho, your masterpiece 'The Alchemist' tells the story of a lone boy's long journey, full of pitfalls and difficult decisions, to discover his destiny. Is there not the merest trace of awareness in your cavernous mind, Mr. Coelho, that this describes too the target of your scorn?

"War is terrible, Mr. Coelho, and it is also a sign of humanity that President Bush's decision to wage war in Iraq feels bad to everyone. But as another literary giant who, stands almost as tall as you, Mark Twain, once remarked: 'We all do no end of feeling, and we mistake it for thinking.'

"To confuse your fine feelings with thinking, Mr. Coelho, is doing your deep mind a great disservice.

"Yours respectfully,
"James Hamilton"

Exciting Roro concept

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE OPENING of President Macapagal-Arroyo's roll-on, roll-off (Roro) "Strong Republic Nautical Highway" (SRNH) is an exciting concept which could very well be her major legacy to the nation. I followed in the media the trip GMA made over the past week from Manila through the Visayas and Mindanao, to dramatize the fruits of the EO she recently signed to liberalize the Roro. I must say that what government PR people term the "highways of the sea" and the "moving bridges concept" is something that could revolutionize not just business and agriculture in our island provinces, but also domestic tourism.

I discussed this concept with Neda Director General Romy Neri and he pointed out that it will minimize the handling expenses and time travel for goods, resulting in reduced prices for consumers. This is because there will be less need for loading the goods on and off barges, as cargo trucks themselves can get on the Roro. Neri said the biggest beneficiaries will be our island provinces. Preliminary reports indicate that cement costs have gone down in Iloilo while businessmen are happy that they don't need to keep big inventories anymore.

* * *

Full-page advertisements in the papers showed the Roro rates for passengers traveling in air-con buses and Roro boats or in their own vehicles from Luzon to the Visayas, or for rolling cargo (alas, the ads forgot to indicate phone numbers where inquiries could be made), and schedules of departures to and from Manila and the Visayas. Thus, it is now possible for a whole group to travel in their van from Manila to Caticlan, the jump-off point to fabled Boracay. This is via Batangas City's port where they can load their car on the Roro to Calapan, Mindoro, drive down to Roxas town at Mindoro's tip and then get on the Roro again to Caticlan, where they can catch the boat to Boracay, or proceed to Iloilo. Travelers, however, have to be assured safe parking areas for their vehicles in Caticlan and security in some sensitive areas of Mindoro. But the possibilities are enormous for tourism and I myself would like to join a caravan this summer.

* * *

Sen. Panfilo Lacson's lawyer, Philip Sigfrid Fortun, wrote to clarify issues raised in this column last April 3. I wrote that the April 1, 2003 Supreme Court Resolution did not actually "reverse" its May 28, 2002 decision as the latter never declared that Lacson and his men could not be prosecuted anymore. Fortun opined that the SC's May 28 ruling said it could not rule on the retroactive effect of Section 8, Rule 117 on whether the required notices (to offended parties) were complied with, for lack of sufficient factual bases, leaving that determination to the trial court. He also stressed that the SC held that the dismissal of the cases against Lacson bore his express consent as it was he himself who moved to dismiss them for lack of probable cause.

But he asserted that the SC "expressly and clearly reversed" itself when it declared that it had indeed found factual basis for concluding that Section 8, Rule 117 could not be applied retroactively in Lacson's case and that the records clearly show the lack of the required notices; it also pronounced that Lacson "did not expressly consent to the dismissal of the cases against him, thus he could not invoke the new rule in his favor."

* * *

Former Senate President Jovito Salonga, analyzing the recent decision and separate opinions in the April issue of Kilosbayan Magazine, labeled as "inaccurate" the contention of Lacson and his lawyers that the May 28 ruling had already decided by a 13-0 vote that the criminal cases for murder against him could no longer be revived due to the lapse of the two-year period. To buttress his argument, Salonga cited a critical passage in the May 28 ruling penned by Justice Reynato Puno (who became the lead dissenter in the April 1 ruling) which said: "The records of this case are inconclusive on the factual issue of whether the multiple murder cases against Lacson are being revived within or beyond the 2-year bar."

* * *

Salonga also countered the criticism against the ponente in the April 2 ruling, Justice Romeo Callejo. He was being criticized for disqualifying himself in the Court of Appeals deliberations on the Lacson case because his nephew-in-law, Jaime Caringal of the PNP intelligence group, had helped investigate the case against Lacson, and then "reversing" himself in the Supreme Court (he not only did not inhibit himself, he became the ponente of the SC decision overruling the CA). Salonga said that while this criticism came from outside the Court, "none of his SC colleagues had the gall or the temerity" to even hint that he should inhibit himself. Salonga said Callejo wrote his SC colleagues that his review of SC records did not yield anything that indicated that Caringal was involved in any investigation of the criminal complaint against Lacson. Thus, he saw no need to inhibit himself, and in fact, he felt he "would be recreant in the performance of my duties as a member of the Court" if he were to do so.

Salonga also praised Callejo's 29-page majority opinion as "remarkable for its lucidity, its use of simple, basic English, and its common-sense interpretation of what the law is, in light of its reason and purpose." He noted that while other judges may prefer "long-winded, grandiloquent language to express a simple thought," Callejo used "simple words to convey a clearer thought and a deeper meaning." I agree that any writer, be he a judge, lawyer, functionary or journalist, should write principally to be understood, but unfortunately many write to impress, which is not impressive at all.

'Bakwit' stories

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MUSLIMA Mama has had to flee her home in Pikit in 1997, 2000, 2001 and 2003. She is all of 17 years old.

A profile written of her says that "to survive in between the distribution of food rations, she asks for rice from her fellow evacuees." Before the fighting this year, she planted watermelons in their family farm hoping to use the money from their sale to restart her schooling. But since she and her family were forced to abandon the farm last February, the watermelons are probably rotting now, taking Muslima's dreams of going back to school along with them.

Because she is articulate and impassioned, Muslima is often selected to be a spokesperson for her group of evacuees who are in Manila (they are scheduled to go home today) to give human voice and face to the conditions of the civilians trapped in the war in Central Mindanao. During a meeting with Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, widely perceived as the architect of the Central Mindanao campaign, Muslima broke down in tears as she recounted her life of hardship. In response, the stone-faced defense secretary merely said: "I could see you're traumatized. Next."

The *bakwits* (Visayan slang for evacuees) were hoping, of course, for a more heartfelt and meaningful response from the officials with whom they met during their visit to Manila, in the course of a "Peace and Humanitarian Advocacy Mission" called "Bakwit sa Syudad (Evacuees in the City)." Organized by the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) in cooperation with Balay Rehabilitation Center, Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), Mindanao Peoples Action Center (MPAC) and various peace groups, relief organizations and religious leaders in Mindanao and Manila, the "eight-day mission of dialogue" was meant to draw attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Central Mindanao.

* * *

AMONG THE 22 evacuees, caregivers and grass-roots leaders from Maguindanao and Cotabato, representing over 200,000 Moro, Lumad and Christian evacuees in Central Mindanao, was Umbai Maliganan. She has been dubbed a "Superwoman" for walking for five straight days from her village of Takepan in Pikit to the evacuation center, surviving on food she foraged along the way. Bai, 51, has seven children and with them has survived two previous evacuations, one of which required her to live for two years in a center.

One would expect her harsh life to have turned Bai cynical and bitter. Instead, she opens graciously to whoever sits down beside her and asks her to talk about her life. And her "take" on their session with the President in Malacañang is refreshing for its candor and naiveté.

"*Maganda naman ang* reception *niya sa amin* (She received us warmly enough)," Bai says of the President's welcome. Her impression of GMA is of a strait-laced authoritarian, "*stricta kaayo* (very strict)," unsmiling and not very conducive to a heart-to-heart dialogue. But this impression was soon revised after four of their representatives were allowed to speak their minds and tell their stories. "My God, *nahirapan pala kayo, kawawa pala kayo* (so you had a hard time, you really suffered)," Bai recalls the President exclaiming. "*Na*-touch *naman siya* (She was touched)," Bai says appreciatively of the President's reaction. (Though I had to wonder how the President could not have known of the suffering and sorrow to be reaped by civilians in the wake of the assault against the MILF.)

* * *

BAI can remember only one instance when the President revealed her vaunted temper, when GMA raised her eyebrows and her voice as she requested the media to leave the room so she could freely dialogue with the *bakwits*.

Bai says she and the others were concerned about this, because, as they presented their urgent requests for food, medicines, clothes and temporary livelihoods at the evacuation centers, the President would immediately turn to her Cabinet members or staff around her and issue instructions. "But how could we be sure that these orders would be followed, if the media were not around to record them?"

Aside from meeting with the President and Reyes, the *bakwit* delegation also met with Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman and National Anti-Poverty Commission Secretary Ging Quintos Deles, Sen. Loren Legarda, church and civic leaders, peace groups and students, and country directors of foreign funding agencies.

I met Bai, Muslima and the other *bakwits* at the "Solidarity Night: Women Leaders of NCR Meet the Women of the Bakwit Mission" sponsored by Pilipina. At once, it was evident that the differences between us, including our faiths, our lifestyles and our expectations, counted for nothing beside everything else we had in common: being women, wives, mothers, daughters and grandmothers.

* * *

LISA Ugay and Mary Ann Arnado, who accompanied the *bakwits* as they made the round of meetings and press conferences, confided how these simple folk were blown away by the wonders of the big city, since many of them were in Manila for the first time.

"They were awed by our overpasses," says Mary Ann. "They asked us why there were bridges over places where there was no water. They were also quite thrilled to see and ride over what they called 'two-story' highways."

If we have learned much from the *bakwits* about the realities of war in Central Mindanao, then they also learned in their eight days in the city that peace is but a prelude to the work of bridging the distance between life in the big city and in rural areas, between rich and poor Filipinos.

1901 Report of the Taft Commission

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

IN ITS last report, the Taft Commission noted that a great majority of people were ignorant, superstitious and "incapable of understanding any government but that of absolutism." The majority were not war-like but submissive and easily (too easily, it seems) "controlled by the educated among them, and the power of an educated... willing to plot and use all the arts of a demagogue in rousing the people, is quite dangerous."

The educated, though full of phrases concerning liberty, actually had only a faint conception of what it was "and the mutual self-restraint which is involved in its maintenance. Divisions of government were not easily understood nor the limitations of power." This was due to the fact that during the Spanish regime the friar and the *presidente* were in control and there was no limit to the exercise of their authority. The Americans found that in the municipalities the people at the helm failed to observe the limits of their power and the populace too submissive to oppose them.

As a result, the commission felt that the electorate should be limited to those who could speak, write or read English or Spanish, or had served in the *municipio* as an officer, or was a taxpayer. (The payment of $15 for a permit to operate a bar was not included.) The suggestion came from Filipinos themselves, with some even advocating that voters should have higher education credentials. The Americans, on the other hand, thought that with the establishment of public education the electorate would grow larger with time. (Granted the view is elitist, still you can't help but wonder whether our politicians would have allowed the proliferation of so-called informal settlers if they had nothing to gain.)

What the commission felt to be a priority was to emphasize to the educated in the community that power had limits, an idea that was "so difficult for them to understand." The Americans also observed "an absolute lack of any sense of responsibility on the part of a public officer to the public at large. Public office it seems had always been regarded as a source of private profit and a means of gratifying private desires, either hate or friendship." It was felt that two generations of being closely monitored would result in forming "a nucleus of Filipinos, earnest, intelligent, patriotic, who will become familiar with practical, free government and civil liberty." (Looks like they were too optimistic.)

We were seen as bright and quick and anxious to learn as well as ambitious. But we lacked persistence and power of application, but it was also the opinion of the commission that we were not ready to "establish a government which would hold together for any length of time." In a short while it would express or evince "all the oppression and all the evils which were known in Spanish times."

In the meantime war raged in the provinces. About 400 "insurgents" were routed in Batangas and 50,000 pounds of rice captured. In Sohoton, Samar, near Basey, Major Waller reported that his men attacked a rebel stronghold. They destroyed three camps, captured 40 bamboo cannons and destroyed a big quantity of rice and other food supplies. The strongholds were nearly impregnable. "The trails leading to it were lined with poisoned spears sticking up from the ground, and were filled with hidden pitfalls. Major Waller's command attacked the enemy unexpectedly. To do this, they had to scale a cliff 200 feet high. This they climbed barefoot, over bamboo ladders. At the top, they found boulders piled up, ready to be precipitated upon an attacking party."

Details about the Samar campaign are not widely known. There were no wholesale surrenders but those captured showed evidence of suffering and hunger. The coasts were being closely patrolled by gunboats using search lights so that it was impossible to land food. The gunboats seized $20,000 and confiscated $100,000 worth of hemp. Insurgent leader Lucban gave a 2-percent tax (money he apparently got from the people) to the local *presidente* who collected the majority of the island's revenues.

In Laguna the insurgent leader was Caballos who had 500 fully armed men under him. A military commission advised the hanging of another insurgent leader, Isidoro Torres, for ordering the assassination of an American corporal. General Chaffee disapproved the order and instead released Torres. The roads from Batangas and Laguna provinces were lined with a continuous stream of men, women and children, seeking refuge from the horrors of war.

General Bell believed that the best peace method was "rigorous warfare until the insurrection is completely subdued." Arrest of members of the Lopez family in Batangas, confiscation of their steamers and rice and the arrest of members of the clergy who were believed to be "instigators of the insurgents," did much to stem the tide of opposition to the Americans.

Considered an important capture in Laguna was that of Agueda Kahabagan. She commanded an insurgent force of 800 men, 300 of whom carried rifles while the rest were armed with bolos. For six years she had been leading insurgent bands against Spaniards and Americans.

Major Lot and three Filipino lieutenants with 10 rifles, 3 revolvers and 24 bolos surrendered to Major Anderson in Lipa. Lot was very much hated in the area, having looted $55,000 worth of jewelry from prominent families.

A matter of faith

YOUNG BLOOD

Rachel Gravador

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I HAVE often wondered about the disturbing gap between the rich and the poor and the unfairness of life in general: I have asked myself why God allows this to happen.

When I was younger, these questions were simply overwhelming. But as I grew older, I learned to face reality without asking too many questions. I just told myself that was what life is and hung on to my faith in God.

Growing up with my family has enriched me more than what I learned in school. With my family, I have learned to value life despite the obstacles. We have managed to sail rather smoothly through hardships and pain, unlike many who seem not to have found the true meaning of life.

Through my family, I see beauty in everyday life: the wind that brushes my hair, the sun that kisses me hello, the magnificent moon and her array of stars, the smiles of people around me. I have experienced the joy and hope brought by the touch of God's hand in the wonders of His creation.

Life for us has always been simple because we only have basic needs and simple wants. Because of this, I have learned the essence of character.

I can still remember the many difficult and trying years my family endured. My mom was pregnant when my father, a civil engineer, could not get any construction project. We felt miserable. We had to give up our little pleasures, including a P1 increase in our daily allowance. There was not enough food on the table, and mom had to bear the humiliation of borrowing money from relatives.

When mom finally gave birth, the burden became heavier. The baby needed a lot of things. Although I quietly resented the fact that the baby's need came first, I tried to understand the situation. Saving half of our P2 allowance, my siblings and I were able to contribute to the needs of our family.

Regardless of the sacrifices we had to make, we still managed to smile and to find joy in simple things. Instead of watching movies or renting a Betamax tape, we had fun by telling jokes and playing games. Instead of going to restaurants, we enjoyed any food prepared by mom. If we had any complaints, we kept them within ourselves.

Our problems continued when I was in high school. Worse, I had to put up with peer pressure and jealousies as well as go through an identity crisis. I often caught myself daydreaming and wishing that things were different.

All these problems, however, could not kill my spirit. I tried to enjoy my teenage days. I joined different school organizations and was even the features editor of our school paper. I participated in various competitions.

My only regret was not being able to take dance lessons at Dance Arts, where all my friends were enrolled. My family couldn't afford it. So every time my friends had their annual dance concert, I would just watch them from the bleachers and imagine myself being part of the show.

College life was even more difficult. But the scholarship that I got lightened the load somewhat.

Then tragedy struck. During my third year in college, fire hit our neighborhood, leaving more than 40 families homeless, including our own. I hardly bothered to ask who or what caused the fire. All I could think of was where we would live.

We went to church the next day and I blamed myself for not being religious or prayerful enough. I felt guilty that I wasn't having conversations with God often enough. I thought that would have helped us a lot.

I decided to stop my studies and give up my dream of becoming an English teacher so that I could find a job. My father patiently explained to me that God had a reason for taking away our house, that this challenge should bring me closer to my Creator, and that, instead of questioning His plans my faith in Him should be strong.

I was stunned by the realization of how little my faith was I seemed to have forgotten about the existence of the Almighty. I had become blind to the beauty of His creation, to His compassion and love. I was engrossed with my own miseries. I could not see the light in that very dark night until my father told me to look for it.

That was the last time I complained about our life. I wrote my term papers under the light of an emergency lamp. saved half of my P10 allowance for our immediate needs collected used clothing from my classmates and gave them away to our homeless neighbors who were living in a public elementary school. Looking at our neighbors, I realized how blessed we were for our family was able to save a lot of things before our house burned down.

It took two long months before our house was rebuilt and we could live there again.

During our final year in college, a teacher asked the class i we ever felt poverty in our midst, in our own families. She asked us to raise our hands if we did. All my classmate raised their hands, but I didn't. I couldn't.

Everyone looked questioningly at me, but no one bothered to ask why I didn't raise my hand. I overheard someone murmur that I must have been born rich.

Rich? Yes, rich because I had my treasures: my family and the faith they instilled in me.

I told my father about my teacher's question and he enumerated all the troubles our family had gone through. looked at my father straight in the eye and said: "Poverty i not being deprived of the many things the rich enjoy. It transcends physical, emotional and financial needs. Poverty only exists if man loses faith in God."

I wasn't sure if I was right. But I was quite certain that i every crisis we went through, Someone powerful was watching over us because we never gave up on Him. We never los our faith and our trust in Him.

Two years after I graduated, my family moved to our new house. My father had purchased four lots in a subdivision designed our house and built it for us.

Things had truly changed. We had our own cellula phones, personal computers, even cars.

I often look back at the years when trial after daily tria molded the character of every member of our family, and wonder at God's magnificent plans. My mind can only think of the joy His love has brought us. Life had been really tough for us, and yet my family was able to overcome the hardships. What made us strong was our faith in Him. The very difficult times we had were blessings in disguise. They strengthened our faith.

I'm truly glad that God gave us crosses, for now we know that He gives no cross we cannot carry.

Rachel Gravador, 29, is a college professor in Davao City.

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Different group should run Meralco

LETTERS

MERALCO is putting salt on open wounds when it sends bills with a message on the reverse side proclaiming that it has been part of the consumer's life for 100 years.

Actually it has only been 50 years since Meralco became a Filipino corporation under the leadership of the late Eugenio Lopez Sr. and only over a decade since it started saddling their hapless power consumers with the curse of the purchased power adjustment.

The PPA materialized from an unfortunate situation, which was not at all the creation of Meralco, but if the figures of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile are to be believed, the Lopez conglomerate which owns minority common stock and manages Meralco, has made Meralco a virtual milking cow at the expense of its captive customers in its franchise area. The method employed is quite straightforward: sweetheart deals are made between Meralco, whose profits are protected and restricted under its franchise, and other Lopez conglomerate corporations not covered by profit restrictions (like its IPPs and ABS-CBN). The rip-off is so transparent that one wonders why there is no law or Security Exchange Commission regulation that prevents this. But then, as we may have seen in the passage of the Epira Law and the Meralco mega-franchise, we cannot expect protection from our legislators when public interest clashes with big business.

It may be time to remove from the Lopez group the management of Meralco and transfer it to an appropriate government-supervised authority. Notorious as the government may be in administering business concerns, professional managers under constant audit by the government would be preferable to a vested interest group beyond government control. We have made all the mistakes in the choice of executives for Napocor, it is about time we learned our lesson and picked a worthy group to run Meralco.

—E.P. DAKANAY JR.,
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France has helped the US, too

I WOULD like to react to the letter last March 19 of Norman Peskin, an American veteran of World War II who served in Europe and fought the Nazis to liberate France.

Peskin should not begrudge France's taking a position against the United States in the current controversy pertaining to Iraq. It may interest him to know that in the United States itself, many Americans are not in favor of the war against Iraq. US superiority in weaponry is not an assurance of victory. I hope the United States wins this war but there is a possibility that it will lose this war not in the war front but in the home front. With public opinion mounting against the war, Iraq might become a quagmire for the United States.

It is true that the United States helped in the liberation of France against the Germans in both World War I and II. But France also helped the Americans when the latter fought against the British during the American Revolution (1775-1783) and in the War for American Independence (1812-1814), better known as the War of 1812.

Many nations, the Philippines included, owe a lot to France. The principles of *liberté*, *egalité* and *fraternité*, which were made popular during the French Revolution, were transplanted to Philippine soil and other lands thirsting for freedom and democracy. The French Revolution was an inspiration to our hero, the Great Plebeian Andres Bonifacio, who founded the Katipunan and whose avowed aim was the overthrow of the Spanish colonial regime in the Philippines. The Philippine Revolution in 1896 resulted in the birth of the Philippine Republic in Malolos which was the first republic in Asia.

We also remember that during the 1986 People Power Revolution, which installed Corazon Aquino as the new president (replacing the dictator Ferdinand Marcos), France was the very first country to extend recognition to the new government. Other countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom and. Russia, followed France.

I cannot join the call for a boycott of French products simply because France did not join the coalition led by the United States. My wife likes French perfume. I like French wine. And the French women, next to the Filipina, are among the world's loveliest.

With my wife and children, I was privileged to have visited France a few years ago and enjoyed the hospitality of the French in various religious and historic sites such as Lourdes and Paris. I, therefore, offer a toast to that country and say, *"Vive le France."*

—ALVIN B. CUÑADA,
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UN Avenue,
Ermita, Manila

Willing, not volunteering, to defend Lacson

IN THE APRIL 8 issue of the INQUIRER, there appeared a news item titled, "Top lawyers offer to defend Lacson." My name was among those mentioned to have volunteered to defend Sen. Panfilo Lacson in the Kuratong Baleleng cases.

Please be informed that I never volunteered my services at anytime, directly or indirectly. In all of my 46 years of actively practicing my profession, I have never volunteered to represent prominent or well-to-do personalities, only those who are oppressed and indigent. I do not intend to make any exception now. If requested, however, why not?

Fighting for the underdog is always challenging and whets the appetite.

—PROSPERO A. CRESCINI,
82 Sct. Lozano St.,
Diliman, Quezon City

Making anti-poverty programs really work

RECENTLY, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the $100 million the Philippines received (or is expected to receive) form Washington would be used to address poverty in Muslim Mindanao, implying that poverty must be dealt with to pave the way for an abiding peace in the region.

This was not the first time Ms Macapagal perceived a correlation between poverty, on the one hand, and insurgency, terrorism and criminality, on the other. When she visited President Bush in Washington—and repeatedly in several subsequent meetings—she underscored that correlation.

But why has not her administration taken concrete and decisive steps to deal with insurgency, terrorism and criminality through programs of action designed meaningfully to reduce poverty? When they faced rising peasant unrest, instead of concentrating on beefing up military muscle, Presidents Quirino and Magsaysay set in motion agrarian, labor and economic policy reforms, thus winning back the people's confidence. Ferdinand Marcos used more carrot than violence to keep the NPA at bay.

The flagship projects of the Macapagal administration—Epira, SPAV, Securitization, Transco, Cha-Cha, Nara and other measures concocted by Agile—are all meant to benefit transnational corporations and their local satraps.

The projects directed to the majority of Filipinos are all repressive: the curfew hours, the national ID system, secret marshals, warrantless arrests, the anti-terrorism bill, the war against the NPA, support for Bush's war, state of lawless violence, AFP-PNP crackdowns, Mayor Duterte's vigilantes and Senator Biazon's Cafgus, etc.

In fact, in the 2003 budget, only the police and the Armed Forces received additional appropriations, as if repressive muscle can be solely relied upon to maintain peace and order. The allocations for education, health and other social services were all pruned.

What Filipinos are waiting for are concrete and decisive programs which positively demonstrate a sustained and mounting commitment to social justice and compassion—programs to assist the poor, the hungry, the unemployed, the sick and the out-of-school who now constitute the vast majority of the nation.

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Unit 301 Union Square Condominium,
145 15th Avenue,
Cubao, Quezon City

We fought common enemies.
CAN WE ALSO SHARE COMMON MEMORIES?

For over a hundred years, the Philippines and the United States stood side by side in brotherhood and friendship.

It is a bond that began in strife. Over a century ago, the two countries fought each other in a bloody war that some historians called "the first Vietnam."

The war ended honorably with the two armies putting aside their arms and agreeing to inaugurate a new era of amity by settling each others' claims.

For us, one such claim is the return of two church bells in the town of Balangiga, Province of Samar, in the Central Philippines.

The bells were seized as war trophies by American soldiers and brought to the U.S. as souvenirs of the campaign.

The bells now hang above the gates of the F.E. Warren Air Force Base outside Cheyenne, Wyoming. It is said that the officers and men at the base, as well as the people of Cheyenne, take great pride in the bells.

For decades, the Philippine government and Filipino veterans organizations in Manila have repeatedly asked the US Federal Government, the US Department of Defense and the State Government of Wyoming to return the bells.

Our cause is clear: The Balangiga Bells are an important part of Philippine history. They are a tribute to the valor of Filipino soldiers. They symbolize the great Catholic Faith that holds sway over 70 million Filipinos.

US authorities—particularly the leadership at the base and the residents of Cheyenne—have refused, explaining that they have a right to the bells and that these treasures were also paid for in American blood.

Keeping the bells as war booty, however, threatens to reopen the wounds of the Filipino-American War of 1899-1906. They engender enmity in a relationship that needs to grow in strength.

Keeping the bells as spoils of war strains a friendship forged by Filipino soldiers and American troops in the great battles they fought together: the Second World War, the Korean War and the War in Vietnam.

As war booty, the bells symbolize the arrogance of power and the insolence of victory. As spoils of war, they celebrate the might of bayonets and the privilege of conquerors.

Returning the bells however will honor the sacrifices made by our two peoples in war and peace.

Returned to their original home, the bells will peal in celebration of friendship, magnanimity and hope.

They will sing aloud the values that have unified Filipinos and Americans for decades: the ideals of freedom, democracy and equality.

It is time to return the Bells of Balangiga to the Philippines.

It is the right thing to do.

CONCERNED VETERANS OF THE PHILIPPINES

World greets Saddam fall with relief, unease, anger

LONDON—Concerns about Iraq's future and where the United States might next unleash its awesome military might tempered widespread relief on Thursday that Saddam Hussein's grip had fallen away so easily.

His 24-year reign appeared to have ended on Wednesday when US troops swept into the heart of Baghdad and jubilant Iraqis danced on a toppled statue of their ousted leader.

But relief in many countries that Baghdad had fallen without a bloodbath mingled with mistrust of the United States in parts of Europe and Asia, shock and anger across the Middle East, and barely concealed satisfaction in Israel.

Some wondered whether President George W. Bush, emboldened by military success, would turn his attention to other nations Washington has accused of pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

Syria, Iran and Libya have all drawn US censure, along with North Korea.

The New York Times said the collapse of government authority in Baghdad "constitutes the high-water mark for a new American determination to use the nation's military might to project its power around the world."

Prince Hassan of Jordan told the BBC: "There are jitters throughout the region about the possibility of (US) threats to Syria and possibly Iran resulting in the domino effect."

That view was echoed even in Britain, the United States' staunchest European ally and its partner in the Iraq war.

"This unprecedented show of US offensive power sends a daunting message. Who knows which way the Abrams tank barrels will swivel next?" the left-leaning Guardian newspaper asked.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz hammered home his government's wish that the US-led war on Iraq would not only eliminate one of Israel's sworn enemies but also chasten Palestinian militants into laying down their arms.

"I hope that in the era after the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime, the Palestinians will understand that the world has changed," he told reporters.

France, a vociferous opponent of the conflict, said "bravo" to the end of the war and fall of Saddam Hussein.

A statement issued in the name of President Jacques Chirac said: "France, like every democracy, welcomes the fall of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, and hopes there will be a rapid and effective end to the fighting."

But presidential aide Alain Juppe struck at the heart of Washington's justification for its actions, adding: "We were right to say that there were other ways to disarm Iraq. Iraq did not use weapons of mass destruction."

Another opponent of war, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, welcomed the victory of US-led forces but said Germany would work to rebuild Iraq only under UN leadership.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who backed Washington over Iraq, said he was pleased the war was over with fewer casualties than feared. An aide of the Pope, who opposed the war, said: "It's a relief, naturally we are all happy."

Many Arabs felt let down by demise of a figure who had represented a rare source of Arab defiance of American power; others were more shocked by his own people's failure to defend or mourn him, and saw a warning to other unelected Arab rulers.

"It's a day of shame," said Ali Jaddah, an engineer in the Palestinian city of Ramallah. "On this day, Arabs have become slaves. The only man who dared to say 'no' to the Americans' face has vanished today. What is left is a bunch of bowing and scraping Arab leaders."

Ahmed Abdel-Rahman, an aide to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, insisted the Palestinians would not be cowed by Saddam's defeat or Mofaz's words.

"The Palestinian leadership is committed to international legitimacy and to the right of the Palestinian people to resist occupation," he said. *Reuters*

Darkest war scenarios did not come to pass

By Deb Riechmann

WASHINGTON—War planners thought Iraq might fight with poison gas and germs. So far, it hasn't. US officials worried that hundreds of oil wells, instead of fewer than a dozen, would be set on fire. Israel braced for incoming missiles that never arrived.

From the start of the war, Saddam Hussein has been portrayed as a leader who would stop at nothing to keep his regime alive. Yet, as the war winds down, none of these darker scenarios has happened.

There have been no terrorist attacks on America. Iraq hasn't demolished holy sites and blamed the destruction on the West. And while Iraqi soldiers have disguised themselves as civilians, the Pentagon says there have been no reports, as initially predicted, of troops donning look-alike US and British uniforms to commit atrocities against Iraqis.

The United States and Britain might have overestimated the resolve of Iraq's leaders, military experts say. Or, the coalition might have rendered Iraqi troops impotent with a speedy roll to Baghdad. It's also possible that Saddam was incapable, for whatever reason, of being as ruthless as he's been depicted.

"I think Saddam is as evil as we thought, but we may have assumed that he had greater freedom of action than he actually did," said historian and retired Army Lt. Col. James Carafano.

An authoritarian regime, by definition, requires centralized control, he said. It's possible that the Iraqi leadership gave orders to torch oil wells, launch chemical weapons or fire missiles at Israel, but that the commands were ignored.

"At the end of World War II, Hitler was sitting in a bunker, moving around these divisions, vigorously defending Berlin," Carafano recalled. "Nobody had the guts to tell him: 'Those divisions have evaporated and the Russians are at the door.'

"You might have had the same dynamic here."

Carafano said he's seen reports that suggest Saddam decided against pulling his Republican Guard divisions back into Baghdad because he feared a coup. Maybe he was just afraid to have them "too close to the throne," he said.

There are numerous reasons why Iraq didn't deploy chemical or biological weapons, military analysts say. Saddam's forces could no longer get to them, never had them, didn't want to give the coalition justification for the invasion, lacked the means to disperse them, or destroyed them when UN inspectors came looking.

Also, facing stiff counter fire from coalition forces, it's doubtful that Saddam would have been able to fire enough chemical weapons to make a difference, Carafano said.

"He could have maybe shot a couple of rounds, but not the thousands of rounds needed to accomplish anything," he said.

It's possible that the coalition troops rendered Saddam's troops incapable of using these kind of weapons.

"Allied air power probably paralyzed any efforts to recover most such weapons and certainly destroyed many potential delivery systems," Anthony Cordesman, a military expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said in a brief released Thursday that outlines the first lessons of the war.

Another fear was that Iraq would fire a barrage of missiles into neighboring Kuwait.

When the war began, civil defense sirens blared in Kuwait and televisions flashed "Danger, Danger." People ran into bomb shelters. Police went on the highest alert. Then the panic subsided.

Some of the 20 missiles Iraq fired at Kuwait fell harmlessly into the Persian Gulf or the desert; others were intercepted by Patriot missiles. Only one caused minor injuries when it landed in front of a Kuwaiti shopping center.

Israel feared a repeat of the first Gulf War when Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles, causing damage in Israel, but few casualties. Missile attacks against Israel may have been averted this time when special coalition forces seized two airfield complexes believed to house Scuds capable of reaching Israel. *AP*

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STOP U.S. WARS OF AGGRESSION!

Iraqi children victims of Bush II's war. *(Al-Jazeera)*

WE, ARTISTS, WRITERS, AND CULTURAL WORKERS, denounce the Bush government and its coalition's invasion of Iraq; the damages that this illegal, immoral,and inhuman war have so far inflicted on civilians, specially women and children; and the irreparable destruction it has wrought on historic sites of our world's common cultural heritage.

We reject President Macapagal-Arroyo's rabid support for this U.S.-led war of aggression, and her opening the use of our country and its resources for this purpose. Equally condemnable is the government's exaltation on the prospects of profits for the reconstruction of a purposely-inflicted devastation.

As this so-called "war on terror" of the U.S. has reached Philippine soil, we oppose the Balikatan (Joint US-Philippine Combat Operations), more of which are to be conducted this year in Mindanao. The entry and involvement of foreign military troops in our country is a brazen violation of the Philippine constitution. We fear that these armed operations are actually aimed at keeping Filipinos powerless to dark designs of a global hegemon.

We urge our countrymen not to be taken in by war propaganda, which can blind our eyes of mangled bodies; silence our ears to the moans of victims; and paralyze our minds into ignorant apathy.

We call on all artists, writers, and cultural workers to engage in a massive outburst of patriotic and peace-loving prose, poetry, music, imagery, and performance, as we link arms with our fellow world citizens to rebuff this war of aggression. Together, let us act and work for genuine freedom and justice—*for a lasting peace.*

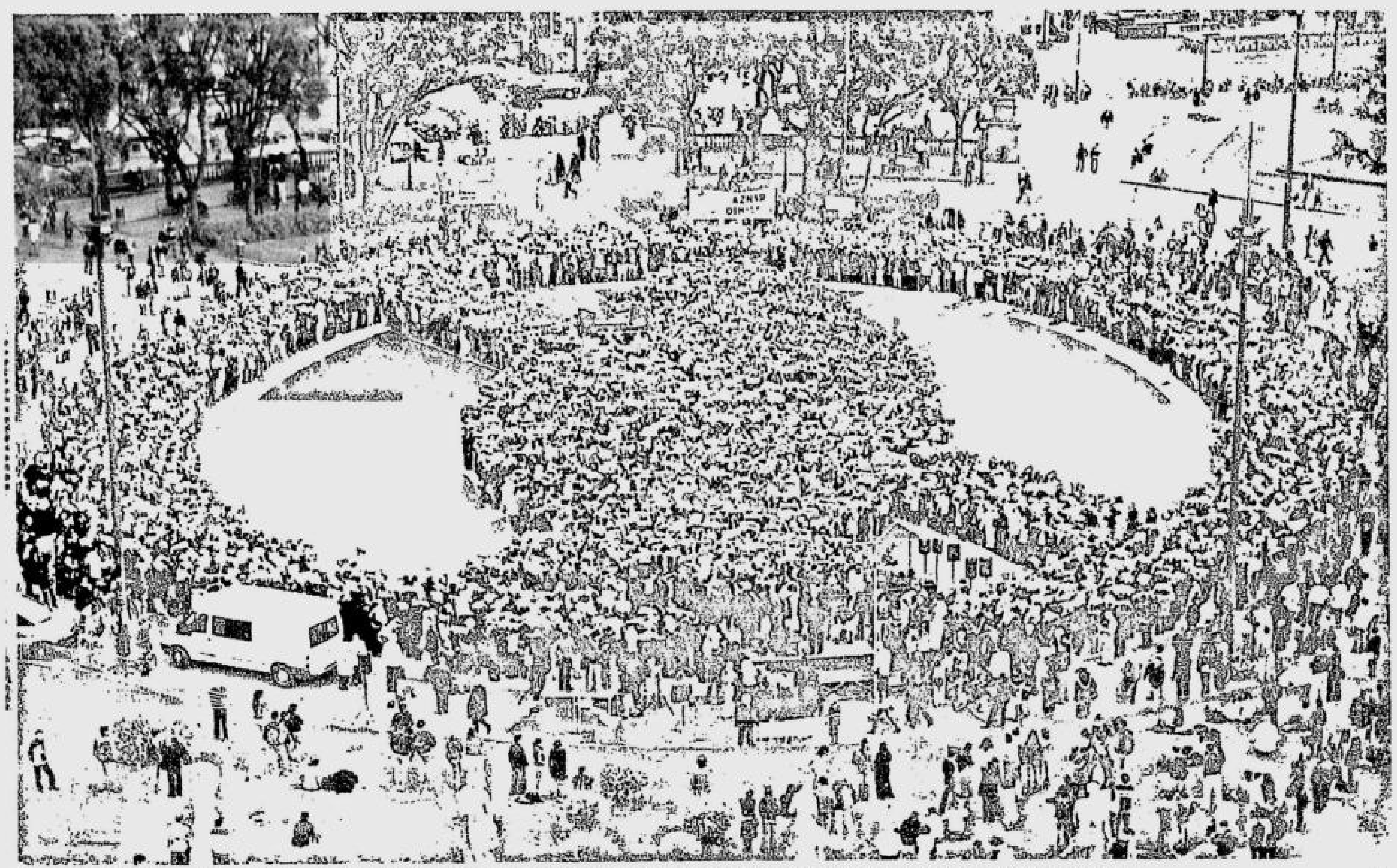
PARTIAL LIST OF SIGNATORIES (as of April 11, 2003): Leonor Orosa-Goquingco · Bien Lumbera · Joel Lamangan · Nanding Josef · Ricky Lee · Patricia C. Sison · Behn Cervantes · Pete Lacaba · Carlitos Siguion-Reyna · Nick Deocampo · Bart Guingona · Bibeth Orteza · Bonifacio Ilagan · Monique Wilson · Tessie O. Luz · Margie Moran-Floirendo · Jamby Madrigal · Mel Chionglo · Lav Diaz · Imelda Cajipe Endaya · Rose Torres-Yu · Joey Javier Reyes · Gil Portes · Soc Jose · Maryo J. delos Reyes · Joey Ayala · Fidel Sarmiento · Nestor Jardin Nonong Buencamino · Elizabeth Oropesa · Jun Cadiz · Ma. Isabel Lopez · Alice Guillermo · Grace Nono · Cynthia Lumbera · Ed Instrella · Ronnie Lazaro · Lara Fabregas · Pinky Amador · Ricky Davao · Joel Torre · Rio Locsin · Diana Zubiri · Amy Perez · Jenny Jamora · Roy Alvarez · Jaime Fabregas · Bambam Aquino · Bodjie Pascua · Harlene Bautista-Sarmenta · Romnick Sarmenta · China Cojuangco · Wowie de Guzman · Melissa Mendez · Lou Veloso · Joel Garduce · Isko "Brod Pete" Salvador · Earl Ignacio · Rossana Abueva · Jeffrey Hidalgo · Malou Jacob · Frank G. Rivera · Ryan Agoncillo · Marili Fernandez-Ilagan · Angie Castrence · Bayang Barrios · Chikoy Pura · Popong Landero · Susan Fernandez · Antipas Delotavo · Roland Tolentino · Jun Cruz Reyes · Monico Atienza · Bayani Abadilla · Frederick Sievert · Grace Sievert · Karen Flores · Kakai Bautista · Aya de Leon · Myrene Academia · Clottie Lucero · Ed Manalo · Aleli Agoncillo-Quirante · Luchi Perez · Julie L. Po · Coco Bagadion · Fe Lacsamana · Elsie Losabia · Joven Castro · Kontak Castro · Ruth Borja · Sonny Cristobal · Luzviminda Casagan · Annaliza Villar · Victoria Belarmino · Josephine Santos · Doreen Cuevas · Ermie Concepcion · JC Castro · Gene de Loyola · Rey Paz Contreras · Fred Liongoren · Emmanuel Balboa · Alex Umali · Alex Baluyut · Boy Dominguez · Egai Fernandez · Totz Tolentino · Cooky Chua · Heber Bartolome · Cynthia Alexander · Babes Alejo · Lei Garcia · Grace Manuel · Jackie Co · Malou Repuno · Tess Liongson · Cora Gurmin · Auch Atencio · Neil Doloricon · Fr. Bert C. Layson, OMI · Raymund Marasigan · Jess Bartolome · Tala Contreras · Herminio Beltran · Recah Trinidad · Gelacio Guillermo · Elmer Ordoñez · Sharon Cabusao · Sandy Hontiveros · Paul Galang · Jaja Paulate · Brian Tibayan · Jojo Gabinete · Danny Arao · Judy Taguiwalo · Andrei Jose · Arthur Zavadera · Risa Jopson · Len Macariola · Malu Maniquis · Mary Carling · EJ Mijares · MC Po · Mallotz Quodala · Chitoy Zapata · Khryss Adalia · Glecy Atienza · Liza Magtoto · Dido de la Paz · Renato Lucas · Ramon Guillermo · Jennifer Padilla · Annabellie Gruenberg-Jose · Josie Guillen · P.T. Martin · Mary Ruth Borja · Chinggay Bernardo · Neal Robles · Alexander Cortez · Ricamela Saturay · Gina Lumauig-Abella · Yogi Mejia · Claire Sablay · Jose Duran · Emil Mercado · Raoul Ignacio Rodriguez · Edwin Quinsayas · Gilda Abenes · Ferdie Malicdem · Lot Contreras · Joven Castro · John Elgin Fernandez · Lesli Palomera · Anel Fernandez · Noel Tagunicar · Joey Hernandez · Freda Dado · Dante Ambrosio · Danilo Consumido · R. Fulleros-Santos · Joel Saracho · Gibet Torres · Norma Respicio · Romy Santos · Noel Cuizon · Concerned Artists of the Philippines (CAP) · SinagBayan · Amado V. Hernandez Resource Center · SINING BUGKOS · Tambisan sa Sining · UP Artists' Circle · Center for Anti-Imperialist Studies · UGATLAHI · Kalipunan ng Sining at Kultura sa Pasig · Sining Binhi · StExposure · Kapisanan ng mga Mandudula sa Marikina · UP Mass Communicators Organization · CONTEND · Karatula · Panday Sining · Sining Lahi · A.R.T.I.S.T.S. · Sining Octubre Nueve · Dulaang Ganap EARIST · Andres Bonifacio Choir · Pagsasalin sa Wikang Pambansa · GSUSI-UST · ART2TAN · Asin · Buhay · Color It Red · Jerks · Vishnu Mantra · Daang Bakal Sculptors Collective · Graffitti Arts · Radioactive Sago Project · Coffee Break Island · Wuds · Imago · Bersus · Collie Herb · Burp · Cambio · Village Idiots · New World Disorder · Pula · Agaw Agimat · DKK Cordillera · Aklas Sining · Dulaang Katig · Sining Padayon · Budyong Sining · Kamalayang Sining (KYUSI) · Teatro Navoteño · Dulaang Lambat · Tanghalang Sta. Ana · Rape Seed · Kristos Karma · Union Factory · Hudaska · Tomas Katumba · Margarina · Butong Pakwan · Bad Shot · Condemned · Morbid Karma · Seventh Sign · Quitch · Pitbull · Brownman Revival · Nancy Drool..

JUST THE FACTS: *U.S. budget for war on Iraq: $80B • Estimated cost of Iraq 'reconstruction': $100B • Iraq's proven oil reserves: 122B barrels • 1972: Iraq nationalized all foreign oil holdings • 1991: Big U.S. Oil prohibited from investing in, or buying, Iraqi oil • 1991: Gulf War I • U.S. military spending: $1.08B/day • 2002 estimated military spending in the world: $850B, 50% spent by U.S. • WAR ON IRAQ: 14,000 precision-guided bombs dropped by US-led forces • 22 journalists killed • At least 1300 Iraqi civilians reported killed, thousands more seriously injured, hundreds of thousands displaced • Half-million Iraqi children suffering trauma • US VP Dick Cheney's Halliburton, Chevron Texaco, rest of Bush-Blair's Big Oil Buddies join Wolfowitz, Israel's Sharon and convicted felon Ahmad Chalabi in choice post-Saddam projects • Support given WHO for Iraqis' health needs: $3M • Total megatonnage of US bombs and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) dropped largely on Iraqi civilians heaviest since US debacle in Vietnam • Still no evidence of Saddam's WMDs • 9/11 terrorist network not yet busted • Al Qaeda's historical ties to CIA-affiliated ISI of Pakistan still unprobed • Still not a single official sacked for Bush government's colossal failures of 9/11 • Amid Saddam's fall, Bush violating Philippine national sovereignty again with Balikatan 03-1 clinching rash of terrorism in Mindanao • 80,000 Filipinos displaced by Gloria's all-out-war policy in Mindanao*

Magkita-kita sa **Welcome Rotonda, Q.C., Sabado, Abril 12, 2:00 ng hapon sa "GLOBAL PROTESTS AGAINST THE US WAR OF AGGRESSION"!** Sumama sa mga kasabay na rali sa **Baguio, Vigan, Santiago, Angeles, Cebu, Bacolod, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Davao, Cotabato, General Santos, Butuan, Surigao, Kidapawan** at **Cagayan de Oro.** Maging bahagi ng **higit 30 milyon na sa buong mundo** na tahasang nagprotesta laban sa terorista, iligal at imoral na giyerang ito!

GET ORGANIZED! Enlist with Artists for Peace, #65A 10th Ave., Cubao, Q.C., tel. 421-1880 or email artists4peacephil@yahoo.com · Urge your local town, city and provincial councils to pass antiwar resolutions and endorse approval of antiwar resolutions pending in Congress · Counter the lies with: www.justicenotwar.tk, www.bulatlat.com, www.globalresearch.ca, www.whatreallyhappened.com, Ngayon Na Bayan (2-4 p.m. weekdays at DZRJ 810 KHz) · Join antiwar forums, assemblies and rallies

Abangan ang pagtatanghal ng **KALBARYO NG BAYAN** sa Trabaho at Bustillos, Sampaloc, Manila!



THOUSANDS of people protest against the US-led war in Iraq April 10 by forming an anti-war symbol at Cataluña square in Barcelona. AFP

Protesters focus on anti-occupation

WASHINGTON—Far from celebrating the presumed quick end to the war in Iraq, US peace activists say they are outraged at the prospect of a lengthy military occupation there and are gearing up for more protests.

Massive rallies had been planned across the United States and in major cities around the world this weekend to call for an end to the US-led war.

Now organizers say the rallying cry of the protests will be an end to the impending occupation of Iraq by coalition forces.

"It's more urgent and more important than ever that there be a mobilization," said Sara Flounders, co-director of the New York-based International Action Center who is helping to organize the demonstration.

She insisted that despite the fast-changing events in Iraq, this weekend's world-wide protest "is absolutely going forward—if anything with greater determination and greater clarity.

"Only now the focus is, 'No' to colonial occupation," said Flounders.

The weekend's protests are organized by the ANSWER coalition, a confederation of anti-war and social action groups that was a key organizer of many of the massive demonstrations held in the weeks before the start of the war.

Flounders said protests are planned in San Francisco, Washington and several other US cities and in some 40 countries including Britain, Italy, Japan and Korea.

The protesters, however, represent a minority view.

According to a new opinion poll by the Pew Research Center, 76 percent of Americans believe the United States made the right decision when it went to war with Iraq to bring down the government of Saddam Hussein and rid Baghdad of its suspected weapons of mass destruction.

Fifty-one percent said it would be necessary to kill or capture Saddam Hussein in order to be able to declare victory.

But peace activists remain undaunted. Some said they will continue to protest lest Iraq be just a first US conquest, to be followed by other states whose governments Washington disapproves of.

Other organizers say they are pushing for the United Nations to take the lead in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. *AFP*

Ecuador cops foil $1.5-M plot to kill president

QUITO—Police have uncovered a $1.5 million plot to assassinate Ecuadoran President Lucio Gutierrez by a group of Colombian hitmen from Cali and Pasto, National Police Chief Edgar Vaca told lawmakers.

An anonimous note sent to the Ecuadoran Embassy in Bogota in mid February alerted Quito to the conspiracy, but so far a joint police investigation has netted no suspects, Vaca told Congress Thursday.

Vaca said the alleged assassins—nine Colombians and two Ecuadorans—received 100 million Colombian pesos ($37,000) to buy weapons and were promised $1.5 million for the assassination.

The men plotted in the Colombian cities of Cali and Pasto and were to have crossed into Ecuador to survey their target before carrying out the assassination within 60 days, Vaca added.

While security around the president was secretly reinforced, Gutierrez, 45, boasted to reporters as he walked to his presidential palace: "I protect myself with God, the people of this country and my conscience."

As a cost-saving measure, Gutierrez shortly after taking office in November urged his cabinet members to leave behind their vehicles one day a week.

A leftist retired army officer and former coup leader, Gutierrez last month said he was the target of a conspiracy by some members of the business community for his anti-corruption drive.

Presidential spokesperson Antonio Tramontana told Ecuavisa television that the Colombian police alerted Ecuador to a possible assassination plot in February, but that Ecuador decided to investigate it in secret.

Gutierrez leapt into the spotlight in January 2000 after participating in a coup to oust then-president Jamil Mahuad, briefly taking power alongside an indigenous leader and a civilian politician. Mahuad was reviled for bailing out foundering local banks.

But only hours after the coup, the military installed Mahuad's vice president, Gustavo Noboa, as president. *AFP*

LA shaken by arrest of socialite 'Chinese spy'

LOS ANGELES—For years she was a society hostess, a prominent Chinese-American who hobnobbed with politicians, presidents and millionaires.

But on Thursday Katrina Leung was behind bars and Los Angeles was buzzing with news that she had been charged with being a double agent who passed classified national security information to China obtained during a secret 20-year love affair with her FBI handler.

Leung, 49, was jailed pending a hearing next week and her FBI handler, James Smith, now retired, was released on bail on charges of gross negligence for allegedly allowing Leung to obtain documents from a briefcase he left open at her posh San Marino home during "debriefing" sessions.

"There is not a lot of spy intrigue in Los Angeles politics, so people are absolutely shocked at this," a city hall insider said. "I think the ripple effects of her arrest have not yet been fully understood."

Both Leung and Smith were arrested on Wednesday after a year-long investigation. The information Leung is alleged to have passed to China included details on FBI personnel, phone lists and intelligence on the whereabouts of Chinese fugitives.

Leung, who runs a business consultancy and a bookstore, had a vast network of contacts, serving as a director of the influential Los Angeles World Affairs Council, as secretary of the National Association of Chinese Americans. She also helped organize banquets and functions for Chinese dignitaries including one for then-Premier Zhu Rongji during a visit in 1999.

"We were as surprised and shocked as anyone when the news broke regarding Ms Leung. Ms Leung has been a community activist for many years but has served as a volunteer board member of the Council for only three months," said J. Curtis Mack, president of the Los Angeles World Affairs Council.

She was an activist for former Republican Mayor Richard Riordan, accompanying him on a 1998 trip to China, and a fund-raiser for California's Republican 2002 gubernatorial candidate Bill Simon.

Simon, in a campaign speech last year, called Leung an "old and dear friend," according to a published transcript. Simon could not be reached for comment on Thursday.

Leung was also the president emeritus of the Los Angeles-Guangzhou Sister City Organization and took part in an international trade forum in Hong Kong in December last year. *Reuters*

FRENCH tourist Déborah Jaoui (left), 21, and Sonia Arbib, 20, are being hailed heroines by Cubans after they escaped from a hijacked ferry April 2 by jumping into the sea. Their escape encouraged others to jump and reportedly began the "happy" ending to the standoff between the hijackers and Cuban authorities. AFP

Nato troops nab ex-Bosnian Muslim commander

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina —Nato-led peacekeepers in Bosnia have arrested Naser Oric, a Bosnian Muslim wanted by the UN war-crimes tribunal in The Hague, Nato in Bosnia said Friday.

Oric, 35, was the wartime army commander in the eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica, where the worst massacre of civilian Muslims during the 1992-1995 Bosnian war occurred. He was arrested late Thursday.

However, Oric, who was in charge of the defense of the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica from Bosnian Serb forces during the war, is accused of war crimes against Serbs. The Muslims have been seen so far as the only war victims in Srebrenica.

The tribunal in The Hague charged Oric with "violations of the Law and Customs of War, (including) murder, cruel treatment, wanton destruction and plunder," said a statement issued by the Nato-led peacekeepers in Bosnia, known by their acronym SFOR.

He is to be transferred to the Netherlands soon, said prosecution spokeswoman Florence Hartmann from The Hague, Netherlands. Oric was indicted secretly, enabling authorities to make a surprise arrest.

According to witnesses, Oric was about to enter the building in which he lives in the northern Bosnian city of Tuzla when several cars, including two vans, surrounded him and about a dozen men in civilian clothes jumped out and forced him to lie on the ground.

Oric was then quickly pushed into a van and driven away. Neighbors who watched the action said the entire operation lasted less than two minutes. SFOR helicopters hovered over the neighborhood during the operation. *AP*

Castro moles tracked dissidents' movements

HAVANA—US efforts to back opponents of Cuba's communist government were so heavily infiltrated by undercover agents that some had passes to the American diplomatic mission, Cuban officials said on Wednesday.

Opponents of President Fidel Castro said they always suspected some of their colleagues were spies but were surprised at the large number—12—who surfaced as witnesses at last week's trials of 75 dissidents.

The biggest surprise was Aleida Godinez, alias Agent Vilma, who worked as the secretary of Martha Beatriz Roque, a dissident economist supported by US diplomats in Havana.

Roque received a 20-year prison sentence.

"She (Vilma) did us a lot of damage. She had access to the finances and the archives and handed everything over to the government," said veteran human rights activist Elizardo Sanchez.

Dissidents were given prison sentences of up to 28 years for treason in the trials that were condemned for their severity by foreign governments and international rights organizations. Cuba accused the United States of violating diplomatic conventions in its efforts to subvert Castro, in power since a 1959 revolution.

Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque showed videotaped testimony of two undercover agents at a news conference on Wednesday where he accused the Bush administration of turning its diplomatic mission in Havana into the headquarters of the island's small opposition movement.

"I'm an agent. Agent Tania of the Ministry of Interior," Odilia Collazo, known as the leader of the Pro Human Rights Party of Cuba, said in testimony taped during the trial of a dissident.

She said she supplied the US diplomatic mission with reports on human rights abuses in Cuba.

Alleged journalist Nestor Baguer, otherwise known as Agent Octavio, who had worked for Cuba's security police since 1960, said he visited the US Interest Section so frequently he had a special pass allowing him entry on any day.

Baguer, 72, said he was asked by US diplomats to write about power outages and food and gasoline shortages in Cuba for independent Cuban media published in the United States on the Internet.

On March 14, he attended a meeting of 34 dissident journalists in the residence of the top American diplomat in Havana, James Cason, and was asked to head a workshop on ethics in journalism, he said.

Baguer said US diplomats gave tape recorders, shortwave radios and digital cameras to independent reporters who were paid from the United States by using a Canadian bank debit card called Transcard.

"They would tell the journalists what subjects interested them," he said. "The majority of the journalists are mercenaries that spend their time slandering Cuba."

Another undercover agent, Manuel David Orrio, or Agent Miguel, organized the journalists' meeting at Cason's residence and invited foreign correspondents to attend by calling them on the cellular phone of a US diplomat. *Reuters*

'Murdered' girl back from dead

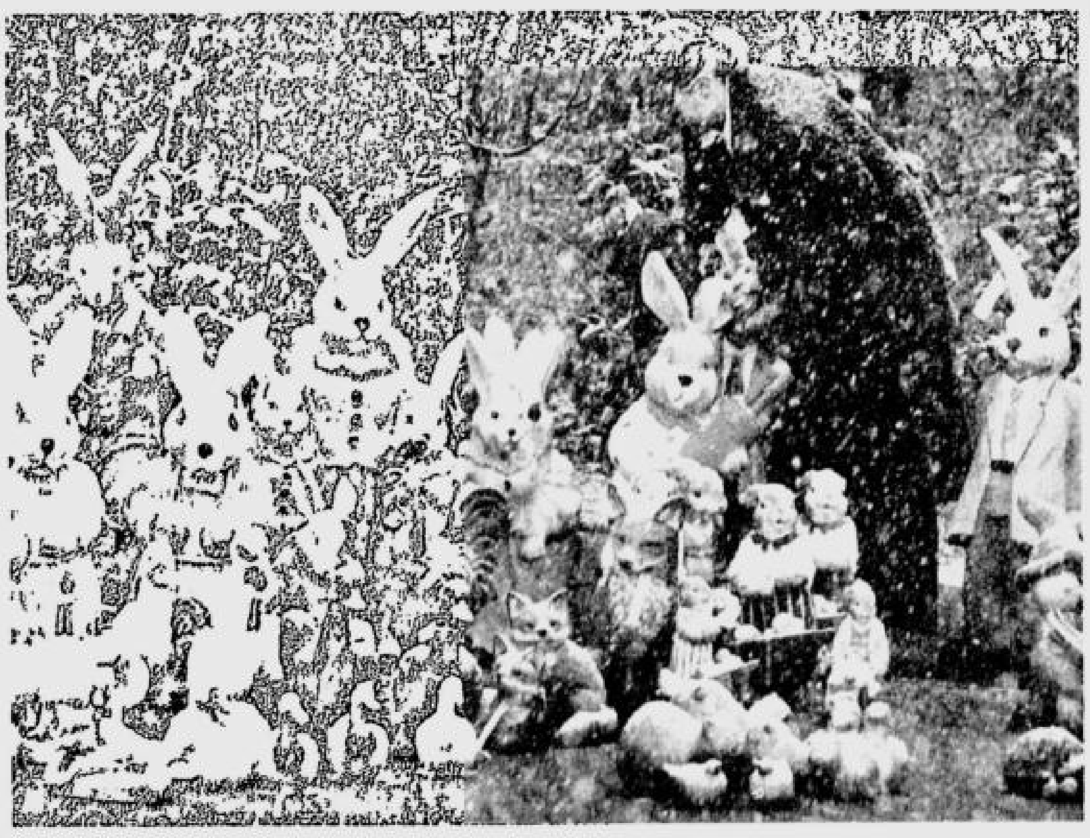
CANBERRA—Whodunnit? Nobody.

Australian teenager Natasha Ryan, who disappeared four years ago and was presumed dead, has resurfaced—midway through the trial of her alleged murderer.

Ryan, 18, was found Thursday, living with her boyfriend in a house just one kilometer (half a mile) from her mother's home in the coastal town of Rockhampton in Queensland state. She was being questioned by police Friday.

Ryan's reappearance coincided with the trial in a Queensland court of Leonard John Fraser, 51, who was charged with the murder of her and three other women. Prosecutors immediately dropped the charge against Fraser for Ryan's murder.

The case has been adjourned until Monday when Fraser's lawyers are expected to argue for the entire trial to be abandoned. *AP*



SNOW IN EASTER, MANILA'S DREAM

An employee of a gardening shop removes snow from Easter bunnies April 10 in Duesseldorf, where snow is falling two weeks before Easter. AFP

Pope calls on world to heal wounds left by conflict in Iraq

VATICAN CITY— Pope John Paul II appealed to nations and religions Thursday to work to salve the wounds left by the US-led war on Iraq, in his first public declaration since the fall of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime.

The pope told a Catholic youth celebration in St. Peter's Square that it was "only by commiting ourselves to building peace will it be possible to relaunch cooperation between nations and harmonize the divergent interests of cultures and institutions."

Though he made no direct reference to the conflict in Iraq, the pope was voicing a key Vatican concern throughout the war, the need to avoid a clash between Mulsim and Christian civilizations.

POPE JOHN Paul II during a meeting with young people in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican April 10. REUTERS

John Paul II made the comments during a celebration in St. Peter's Square for tens of thousands of youths from Rome and the surrounding province of Lazio, ahead of the 18th world youth day celebrations on Palm Sunday.

The 82-year-old pontiff, dogged by debilitating Parkinson's disease and arthritis, has always seemed to be at his most animated on occasions like this, surrounded by cheering young people.

He smiled and waved as he was driven through the rain-soaked but joyful crowd at St. Peter's before being helped to his throne under a canopy erected on the rain-swept square.

In his address, made after the audience was treated to folk songs, choirs, ballet and even a rock band, John Paul II urged his youthful audience to "commit to peace in this tormented moment in history, when terrorism and wars threaten the concord between men and between religions."

The pope quoted from Pope Paul XXIII's famous anti-war encyclical "Pacem in Terris," or Peace on Earth, reminding his youthful congregation that Friday is the 40th anniversary of that letter to Catholic bishops.

"It's only in commiting to building peace on the four pillars of truth justice, love and freedom, as we learn in Pacem in Terris, that it is possible to relaunch cooperation between nations."

"We fear this war and its consequences, and we thank you for your constant commitment to peace," a young woman said to lengthy cheering and applause during one of several addresses.

The pontiff, who will be 83 in May, also provided a personal reflection on his 25 years as pope, which will officially be celebrated in the autumn.

"In these 25 years of my pontificate I have been blessed to meet the youth of every part of the world, particularly on the occasion of these festivities. Every one of them has been a worker for the faith," he said. *AFP*

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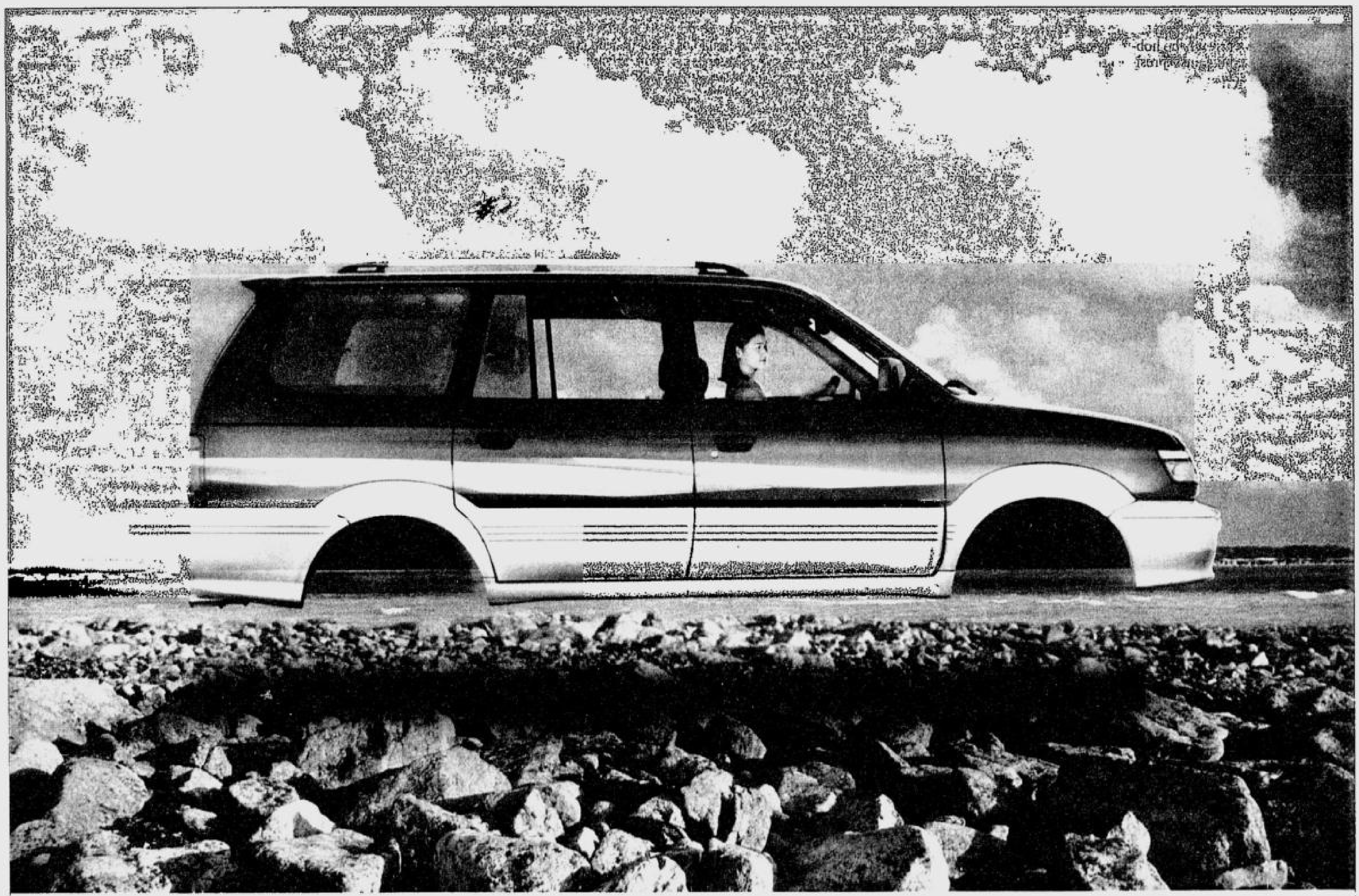

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All praises, no benefits, for war vets

MT. SAMAT, Bataan—For Vicente Germar, 87, the most important news on Bataan Day or Araw ng Kagitingan would have been the approval of a new package of assistance for World War II veterans like himself.

During Wednesday's 61st anniversary of the Fall of Bataan, however, the news that came Germar's way was not positive.

As it was for the fewer than 1,000 elderly veterans who had come from various parts of the country and abroad to gather at the Dambana ng Kagitingan here for the yearly celebration.

Philippine, American and Japanese officials simply praised their valiant struggle and sacrifices. After the poignant tribute, a brass band's soulful rendition of the national anthems of the three countries, a shower of pink rose petals from a Huey helicopter over the war shrine and three blasts from a cannon, Germar went home with mixed feelings.

He was thankful that the government, through the state-sponsored ceremony that took less than an hour, still remembered, in the words of Vice President Teofisto Guingona, "the bravery and indomitable fighting spirit of the Filipinos."

But unlike when he was 21 and with the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) eluding capture by the Japanese, Germar has little time left to wait for adequate support from the government.

His monthly old-age pension of P5,000, which he started receiving only in 1990, is inadequate. "*Kinukulang lagi* (I'm always short)," he said.

If Germar was looking for relief soon, the new head of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office in the US Department of National Defense has described the effects of the current US war on Iraq as a "double-edged sword."

Jesus Terry Adevoso said that while the US counts the Philippines as an ally in the Iraq war and is willing to give anti-terror aid to the country, the cost of the war to the US could bring about major re-alignments in its budget for veterans.

The anniversary rites proceeded smoothly although in Capas, Tarlac, five people were hurt when policemen prevented a group of activists from marching toward the Capas National Shrine here where President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke for the Araw ng Kagitingan rites.

More than 300 members of the Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD) reenacted the infamous Death March in Barangay Aranguren, 4 km from the Capas National Shrine, after they were blocked by policemen.

"They (policemen) were taunting us as we were delivering our speeches," said Millet Morante, KPD secretary general said.

She said five KPD members were hurt when police blocked their way to the shrine. Reports said the police blocking force was composed of 35 policemen and 15 others in civilian clothes.

"Some of our members were hurt when the police started pushing and hitting us with their truncheons without any provocation," a KPD member told the INQUIRER.

Morante also said the police started jeering and taunting them as they delivered their speeches against Japanese war atrocities. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Mayor leads by example on birth control plans

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Classic leadership by example.

A 31-year-old mayor of a northern Cebu town did more than pay lip service to his advocacy for birth control.

Mayor Rex Casiano Gerona of Tabuelan town on Tuesday underwent non-scalpel vasectomy to help promote the government's campaign on family planning.

He led 13 other husbands from Tabuelan and nearby Tuburan town who underwent the procedure during the launching of the family planning campaign in Tuburan.

Government doctors conducted the procedure on Gerona inside his house in Tuburan, whose mayor Rosemarie Suizo, is his sister.

The 13 others were operated on at the Tuburan District Hospital.

Gerona said the procedure was over in 10 minutes. He said he did not feel much pain and that he was able to walk properly after the procedure.

The mayor told the INQUIRER that he decided to undergo a vasectomy in order to lead his constituents in Tabuelan in the campaign for population control.

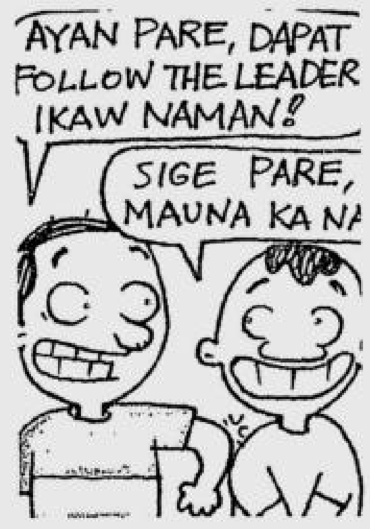
He said he also wanted to show that he was a responsible father and husband.

Gerona and his wife Marife have three children aged five, three and one. The couple is expecting another baby in the middle of this year because Marife is six months pregnant.

The mayor said he and his wife actually planned to have only three children.

They used the rhythm method, as espoused by the Catholic Church. But, he said, there was an apparent slip-up because his wife got pregnant.

Gerona said he was concerned that they might have more children if he would not undergo vasectomy.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Aetas' deaths near river a mystery

ANGELES CITY—The bodies of an Aeta mother and her three children were found floating along a river in Barangay Maloma in San Felipe, Zambales, on Friday last week.

The four, said to have died of drowning, were identified as Feliza Dolojan, 38, and her children Oliver, 5; Nelson, 2; and one-year-old Eva.

Chief Insp. Julieta Sapnu, head of the police detective bureau here, said the victims' relatives had retrieved their bodies and took them to Barangay Sapang Bato here.

Police said the four were crossing the river on board their carabao-drawn cart when rampaging waters overturned it.

The lone survivor, Nani Antonio de la Cruz, reported the drowning to the relatives of the Dolojan family in Sapang Bato here.

It takes about five hours by foot to reach Sapang Bato in the Zambales mountain range.

Sapnu said Feliza's husband, Luis, is detained at the San Felipe jail for still unknown reasons. "This was probably the reason his family decided to cross the river and go to their relatives in Sapang Bato. Unfortunately, they did not make it to their destination," she added.

Sapnu dismissed reports that the Dolojans were caught in a crossfire between government troopers and New People's Army rebels because the victims' bodies bore no bullet wound. *Jun Malig and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Negros sets aside ₱1M in funds to induce rain for sugarcane

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Negros Occidental provincial government has set aside P1 million for cloud seeding operations to stop the sporadic fires that are eating up sugarcane plantations in the province.

Gov. Joseph Maranon said the amount was intended for the initial phase of the operation as the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) promised to put up a counterpart fund.

He and Sugar Regulatory Administrator James Ledesma agreed to share the cost of cloud seeding operations to ensure harvest this year.

The cloud seeding operation would start immediately after the Holy Week, said Maranon.

"We are getting the ball rolling for cloud seeding as soon as possible," said Ledesma, in a separate interview.

Maranon, a sugar planter, said the Sagay Sugar Center reported a 20 percent drop in yield as intense heat burned sugarcane and reduced their purity.

Farmers had not planted because of lack of rain.

"This crop year we are hitting a record production of more than 2 million metric tons of sugar, which is the highest in 10 years," Ledesma said.

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GMA declaration hurting Davao traders

DAVAO CITY—The Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCCI) will ask government to lift President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of "state of lawless violence" in the city as it creates fear in the business sector and among prospective investors.

DCCCI president Romeo Serra said local businessmen were already worried of its effects because it is sending an impression to foreign and domestic investors that Davao City is unsafe.

After the Sasa bombing that killed 16 persons and wounded at least 40 others, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared Davao in a "state of lawless violence."

Serra said DCCCI viewed it with deep concern because of its effects on tourism and business.

Serra said the declaration was creating fear more than the two bombings.

"It is not a come on. And prolonging it would be devastating, disastrous for the business sector," Serra said.

"We are still peaceful—this is the general picture of the city. Our situation here is normal," he said.

Serra said DCCCI has asked Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon to lobby for the lifting of the declaration but there was no response.

"That is why we feel that we now have to go public for the national government to know our sentiments," he said. *Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Balweg murder suspect cleared

BANGUED, Abra—A judge here dismissed the murder case against Iglesia Filipina Independiente or Aglipayan Church worker Lorna Rivera Baba, the suspected mastermind in the killing of former rebel priest Conrado Balweg in December 1999.

Evidence

Judge Corpus Alzate of the regional trial court here said the pieces of evidence presented by the prosecution were "insufficient to prove the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt."

Of the 14 people accused of conspiring to kill Balweg, Baba was the last to be cleared of murdering Balweg in his ancestral home in Malibcong, Abra, on Dec. 31, 1999.

Conspiring

Baba, three Aglipayan priests and 14 lay workers in Ilocos, La Union and Abra were arrested for allegedly conspiring to kill Balweg.

Despite the admission by the New People's Army Agustin Begnalen Command led by Balweg's brother Jovencio, 28 people, including the church workers, were charged with murder.

Eleven church workers were arrested but the cases against them were subsequently dismissed for lack of evidence.

Arrested

Baba, 39, was arrested on March 17, 2000 in Pidigan town by agents of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines ISAFP), allegedly without a warrant of arrest.

She was handcuffed, blindfolded and transported to military camps where she claimed she was tortured. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Iloilo mayors seek ban on village dances

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Town mayors are seeking a ban on "binayle" or village dances in about 1,700 barangays of Iloilo province.

In a recent resolution, the local chapter of the League of Municipalities (LMP) has asked the provincial board to pass an ordinance, banning public dances because these cause problems in keeping peace and order in rural areas.

The 42 mayors, who comprise the local LMP, said police forces, which see to it that dances are trouble-free, are often short in personnel.

Without the *binayle*, the LMP said the police can work on other concerns like "economic recovery and agricultural productivity."

The local LMP even found a champion in the provincial police chief, Senior Supt. Juan Mabugat, who supports the plan to abolish *binayle*.

Mabugat told reporters here that the dances are a "source of criminality and illegal activities" in the province, and are "possible targets of terrorism and sabotage."

The idea of banning *binayle* does not sit well with historians and sociologists here.

Lawyer and historian Rex Salvilla said *binayle* is a tradition in the rural areas that dates back to more than a hundred years.

The *binayle* was not even banned during the days when the Hukbalahap and New People's Army (NPA) controlled many rural and upland villages, said Salvilla.

"Why did they have themselves elected as mayors if they could not maintain the peace and order of their towns?" he said.

Elsa Subong, who teaches sociology courses, said *binayle* is part of a culture that is beautiful and "must not be sacrificed because there is a problem in governance."

Jessica Salas, who has a doctorate degree in education and has made studies of upland communities, said village dances are a social vehicle for communications.

During *binayle*, young people socialize, meet the opposite sex, at an age when they are conscious of their sexuality.

Binayle infuses life in a rural community. It is an affair that many young people look forward to, much like how the children of elite and moneyed families in the cities regard their debuts and cotillion, said Subong.

Salas admitted that *binayle* has become commercialized but local government officials could make it relevant by retrieving the less popular local dances to ensure that young and old could participate. It could also be a tourism-drawing activity.

"If they want to make the dances peaceful, they should ban drinking and sale of alcohol during *binayle*," Salas said.

The resolution to ban *binayle* is now at the committee on ordinances and legal matters of the provincial board after it was endorsed by Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas.

Board member Cecilia Capadosa, who chairs the committee, said public hearings will be held to get the opinion of barangay officials.

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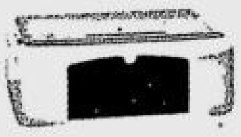

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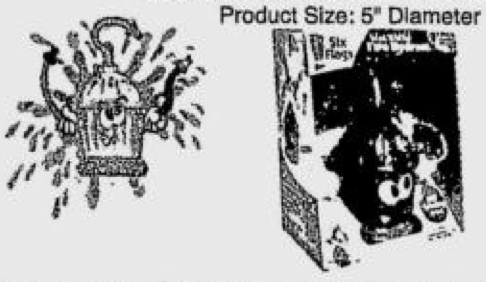

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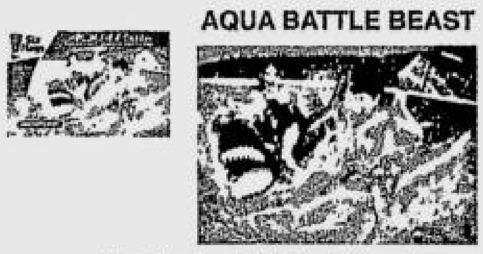

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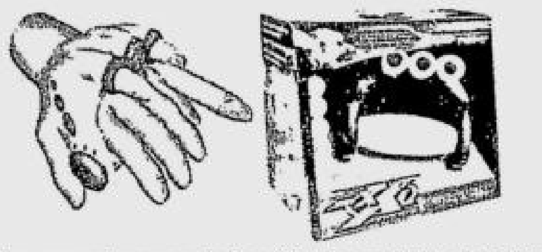

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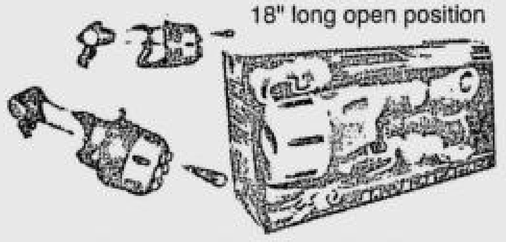

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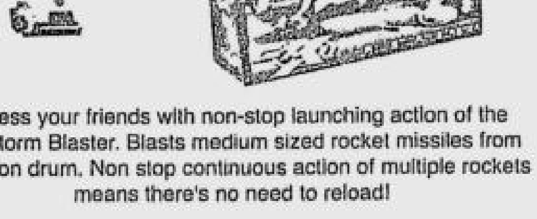

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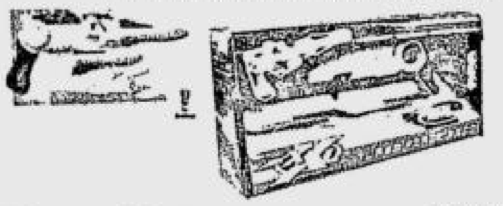

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Bayanihan spirit is alive in Bacolod

By Carla P. Gomez
Bacolod City

THE Bayanihan spirit is alive in Bacolod City where more than a thousand volunteers from different walks of life, from movie actors, public officials, socialites, military personnel, government employees, students, firemen and teachers have been working side by side to bridge the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

The volunteers have been gathering every Sunday since March 9 at a 10-hectare property owned by the Negros Occidental provincial government in Barangay Kabugwason, Barangay Mansilingan, in Bacolod City to help build houses for the poor.

The target beneficiaries of the Negros Occidental provincial government-Gawad Kalinga Socialized housing Project are 922 squatter families from Barangays 6, 8 and 9 in Bacolod City.

The Mansilingan site will be the first national model for a massive relocation project wherein the poor will not be forced to evacuate but will be attracted to the new area, said Tony Meloto, Gawad Kalinga executive director.

The houses are being built using the bayanihan spirit, which is similar to the Habitat for Humanity scheme, according to Gov. Joseph Maranon.

"Our slogan is 'no more slums,' as (the slums have been) the cause of many social problems," Meloto said.

Gawad Kalinga, a non-government organization, aims to build an integrated, holistic sustainable program for human and community development, he explained.

Under the relocation scheme, houses will be made available to government employees to be paid for by monthly installments of P700 to P800, in 25 years, Meloto said.

Sweat equity

For families with incomes below P7,000, houses worth P40,000 will be made available to them through "sweat equity," he added.

This means a beneficiary will have to render work at the housing project site for a period equivalent to the cost of the house that he will get. For every eight-hour work rendered, he will get a "pay" of P250, credited to the cost of his home.

ACTORS Onyok Velasco, Ace Espinosa and Mandy Ochoa with Col. Victor Ibrado, commander of the 605th Infantry Brigade, help build homes for the poor in Bacolod City.
ANDY ALVAREZ

The funding for the sweat equity houses will come from the government and the private sector, Meloto said. "We are tapping religious renewal groups, non-government organizations and local governments to help fund the (sweat equity houses)."

The provincial government and GK initially targeted to build 40 houses at the Kabugwason project, but with pledges coming in from different civic organizations to sponsor or build more houses and cash donations pouring in, GK is now ready to build at least 70 houses, project director Bobby Magalona said.

He said organizations that pledged to donate houses included the Rotary Club, Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, Bacolod City-Negros Occidental Bakers Association, Lions Club, Davies Paints, Dr. Ver Lacson and friends, Women in Travel, John Orola, Garden Club of Negros Occidental, Zonta Club, and EA International Placement Agency.

The Garden Glub has also pledged to do the landscaping of the first 150 houses while the Obstetrics Society pledged to put up a medical clinic.

Stars for others

During the first build day on March 9 movie star Mandy Ochoa, who married the former Gretchen Varela of Bacolod City, Cebu's pride Ace Espinosa and local boxing hero-turned-TV sitcom performer Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, Jr., found time to help build homes for the squatter residents from Barangays 6, 8 and 9.

Ochoa, who started with the GK program when he was still with the Singles For Christ group in 1998, said the turnout of volunteers was a moving sight, as people from all walks "gathered to heal the broken relationship and widening gap between the rich and the poor."

Ochoa also said there were a growing number of Actors' Guild members now involved in the Gawad project patterned after the Habitat Program of former US President and Nobel Peace Prize awardee Jimmy Carter.

"This time, our visit is totally different. We make other people very happy by helping them build their communities. We volunteer our services because we also want to build a lasting relationship with the Negrenses," Ochoa said.

For Espinosa, he said what he saw was very encouraging. "As Filipinos, like the 1,000 volunteers, we should readily help others who need it most," he said.

Velasco, on the other hand, said he willingly accepted Ochoa's invitation because he wanted to return the favor to Negrenses who had been generous to his cause when he was still struggling as a boxer in Bago City.

"It is ironic because it was Mandy who invited me to my own hometown. When he told me to join him in this trip to help the poor, I readily said yes. I had no second thoughts because in the first place, I also came from the poor," Velasco said.

Heaven sent

On March 30 the first 21 squatter-families from Barangay 6, Bacolod City who were identified to be among the poorest of the poor received their Certificates of Award to avail of lots at the Kabugwason project site.

Myrna Hecto, president of Purok Azucena, speaking on behalf of resident-beneficiaries of the housing project, said it was a "hulog sang langit (heaven sent)."

"The response had been very heartwarming, but more donations and volunteers are still needed for the building of homes for the poorest of the poor," Meloto said.

As the Bayanihan spirit lives on in Bacolod, so does the enthusiasm of volunteers who keep coming back each Sunday to build homes for others.

Little Isah gets 'overwhelming' help

By Hazel P. Villa
Iloilo City

THANKS to the kindness of strangers and generous doctors, a little girl with a congenital heart disease will finally have a new lease on life as she has flown into Manila on Friday for a series of tests to determine the procedure needed for closing a "hole" in her heart called Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA), one of the many types of "holes" in the heart.

More than 45 persons throughout the country responded to adopted 5-year-old Isah Mae Rose Buni's plight that was published in the INQUIRER *Visayas* Section on April 7, detailing how the childless Buni couple struggles to keep their daughter alive despite their meager financial resources with Rose as a teacher and her husband Jaime, a carpenter.

Soon after arriving at the Manila Domestic Airport via Air Philippines, Isah Mae Rose and her mother proceeded to the Philippine General Hospital for a series of tests to be conducted by Dr. Jonas Del Rosario and Dr. Charles Cuaso, both US-trained interventional pediatric cardiologists who have volunteered their services with a significant discount.

The Kabayan Hotel at Rotonda, Pasay City, through its Ilongga marketing consultant Lorna Longno, accommodated Rosario and Isah for two nights for free.

Anonymous donors

An executive from Manila who requested anonymity told the INQUIRER he would shoulder the cost of a device worth P80,000 to "close" Isah's PDA and P15,000 for medications after talking to Dr. Del Rosario while others sent separate donations worth P1,000 to P10,000 in a single deposit.

Dr. Del Rosario said the entire transcatheter closure of Isah's PDA costs about P160,000 to P250,000 depending on the institution where it will be performed. This includes the Amplatzer device, which costs $1500 and has to be imported from the United States.

ISAH with her mom Rose.
PDI PHOTO

Most of the good Samaritans preferred to remain anonymous while others offered prayers for the little girl and her adoptive mother Rosario, a teacher at the Iloilo National High School.

As of Wednesday afternoon, donations have been deposited at PNB account number 415-630-982-1 under the name of Isah Mae Rose Buni. Rosario has recorded a total of P47,600 worth of donations from PNB and via courier since Tuesday.

Mrs. Buni said she has used part of this amount to buy plane tickets and other incidental expenses of Isah.

Since Mrs. Buni had no bank account, Hermosa Villa, regional cashier of the Central Bank in Iloilo and Isagani Valderrama, head of PNB Iloilo's Cash Department on Tuesday facilitated the quick opening of an account and provided an ATM Card so that donations could be accepted.

'Plug the hole'

Dr. Del Rosario said in a telephone interview Wednesday that they have to evaluate Isah Mae's condition first and, depending on the size of the PDA, will have to order an Amplatzer device for a transcatheter closure, a non-surgical procedure that will entail implanting the Amplatzer in the PDA to effectively "plug the hole."

He said it would require the use of special catheters that will be navigated through the heart using a blood vessel from the groin. This alternative treatment avoids a large surgical wound, is highly effective and well accepted in many parts of the world.

Dr. Cuaso, an assistant professor at the University of Santo Tomas College of Medicine, explained via email that a PDA is a normal blood vessel that should have closed shortly after birth.

"If this blood vessel is significantly large in size, it may cause heart enlargement, 'flooding' of the lungs leading to pulmonary hypertension and even heart failure. This blood vessel has to be 'closed' to avoid these problems," he wrote.

ISAH clings to her mom.
PDI PHOTO

"Children suffering from these may have exercise intolerance, poor weight gain or frequent upper respiratory infections," said Dr. Del Rosario, also a clinical associate professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine.

Dr. Del Rosario said he would set the date for the operation only after the tests have been done. He will perform the actual transcatheter procedure jointly with Dr. Cuaso at the PGH. Dr. Cuaso said to date since August 2001, 33 Filipino patients have benefited from the transcatheter closure using the Amplatzer device.

"All of them have gone home within 48 hours after admission. Significantly, many of these patients had quick resolution of their symptoms once the PDA is closed and were able to function normally as if nothing happened," said Dr. Cuaso.

Dr. Rowena Pascual, a cardiologist at St. Luke's Medical Center said in the April 7, 2003 story on Isah Mae that procedures for closing the PDA cost anywhere from P100,000 to P350,000 depending on the type thereof and the institution where it will be performed.

"I am very touched with the way total strangers have responded to Isah's plight and I am grateful for their help," said Mrs. Buni who was overwhelmed with the daily text messages she receives from people who say they are praying for Isah or asking for her bank account number so they can "give a little miracle."

Those who may want to get in touch with Mrs. Buni can text her at 09203427945

A 'speechless' affair

BACOLOD EXCHANGE

Ninfa R. Leonarda

THE MORNING after the bomb explosion at the Sasa pier in Davao City, it was bedlam at the Bacolod airport where security officers suddenly banned all vehicles from the terminal area.

Departing and arriving passengers suddenly found themselves having to walk from the highway to reach the pre-departure area, or out on the road to lock their vehicles that had to join the kilometer-long line of parked cars and public utility transport.

I experienced this since I was leaving for Manila that morning. It was worse for those who had heavy and bulky hand-carried luggage because they had to lug them under the hot sun to and from the terminal.

Strangely, we did not experience this when we left Manila on Monday. Although there were several cops at the highway checkpoint just before the domestic airport, our car was just waved through, without even a peak at its interior. Wasn't this very laxity the cause of the presidential tantrum there a few days ago?

* * *

AS IN many other cities in the Philippines, Bacolod has not been spared the paranoia over the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) that has shaken the world in the past weeks. Fortunately, the one case of a returning overseas worker from Singapore turned out to be a false alarm. But the threat has kept a lot of would-be vacationers in Hong Kong, Vietnam and Thailand home.

* * *

THE CITY recently had a very important visitor when President Macapagal-Arroyo dropped by on her way to Dapitan as part of the inauguration of her Strong Republic Highway project. But she stayed only a few hours, part of it sleeping at the penthouse of the L'Fisher Hotel, because she and her party arrived at around 7:30 p.m.

Her first official function was to swear in the new officers of the Negros Press Club headed by Rey Siason of Radyo Bombo. It was, however, a "speechless" affair. All the President did was to induct the officers and shake their hands before having dinner. The club members had been instructed to already hold their program and listen to their own speeches—including the closing remarks—earlier.

* * *

THE CITY is still rocking for the bombshells that came with the discovery that about 300 of its residents had been swindled of some P100 million in the infamous pyramid scheme perpetrated by three companies whose officers, along with their money, are now nowhere to be found. The police and the National Bureau of Investigation have been brought it, and charges filed, but there is little hope of recouping their losses.

* * *

MEANTIME, Bacolod city officials are still smarting from the beating that they got in a survey conducted by the People's Graftwatch that involved permanent employees of the city government as respondents. The result showed that only 6.6 percent of the workers rated the performance of Mayor Luzviminda Valdez as satisfactory, with 93.4 percent saying it was unsatisfactory.

They also rated Rep. Monico Puentevellas as 18.9 percent satisfactory with 81.1 percent saying they were not satisfied with his performance. The Sangguniang Panlungsod, got 5.6 percent satisfactory rating while 64.4 percent said they were not satisfied with the councilors' performance.

When Valdez reacted and claimed that the survey had been manipulated, some of her officials called for another survey, but for some reason or another gave up the idea later.

The Graftwatch chairman, a known friend of Valdez, has announced that his next survey will have media people as respondents, and they will be answering the same questions as those posed to the employees. The problem is that there are a lot of media practitioners who are "embedded" in city hall, if not as casual employees themselves, with their wives, sisters, brothers and other relatives in the employ of the mayor.

A previous survey, with members of the business community as respondents, had also shown depressing results for the officials. The survey covered the year and a half that the officials had been in office.

Bohol lists guidelines on dealing with SARS

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—Health authorities in Bohol are not taking any chances with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), coming out with guidelines for health personnel, hospitals and the public.

Dr. Francisco Razalo, Bohol Provincial Health Office (PHO) chief, said the three sets of guidelines have been approved by Gov. Erico Aumentado and are ready for implementation in the province's 47 towns and this city.

"Maybe it is," Razalo replied when asked whether the SARS guidelines he formulated are the first for local government units in the country.

The PHO chief said the guidelines were adopted from the World Health Organization guidelines and those from other countries.

He said that the guidelines for health personnel and hospitals were drawn up to help them deal with suspected SARS cases.

The guidelines for the public list down steps to take should anyone have symptoms of SARS.

Razalo said preventive measures are important although there are still no recorded case of SARS in the country.

He said the threat should never be underestimated because SARS could spread rapidly.

Razalo said health authorities would meet with personnel of the local Air Transportation Office and Philippine Ports Authority to discuss measures to prevent the entry of the dreaded disease into Bohol.

In his guidelines, Razalo said one suspected SARS case in the Philippines was confirmed to be a non-SARS illness.

However, SARS has spread in Asia, Europe and North America with about 56 deaths and more than 1,550 cases reported occurring in 15 countries so far.

"Because of the precautionary measures already taken worldwide to prevent the further spread of SARS, the Philippines is in the advantaged position of ensuring that SARS would not enter the country if everybody will assume responsibility and do his role accordingly," the guidelines said.

Razalo also played down the possibility of SARS infecting Bohol at this time.

Jellyfish still threat to Luzon power supply

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SUAL, Pangasinan—They are very fragile looking and even melt under the heat of the sun, but jellyfish can plunge the entire Luzon, like they did in December 1999, into darkness.

These soft-bodied organisms abound these days in the vicinity of the 1,200-megawatt Sual power plant, which gets its cooling water from the Baquioen Bay here. But the abundance of jellyfish here poses a threat to the plant's operation.

To keep the pesky jellyfishes at bay, the plant's management has put three layers of nets at the water inlet and formed a "jellyfish patrol" composed of community residents.

The jellyfish patrol works on three shifts, 24 hours a day and keeps the plant's cooling water intake free of intruding sea animals. It also alerts the plant's personnel to the sea creatures' presence.

Three weeks ago, officials of the power plant reported that jellyfish got past the nets and were sucked into the pumps. But plant personnel were able clear the pumps of the creatures before they could affect the plant's operations.

Bernie Babaran, deputy station manager and technical services manager of the Sual plant, assured that the presence of jellyfish in the bay would not affect the operations of the plant.

"We have installed an effective and efficient netting system in place which (is) maintained 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Babaran said.

The jellyfish also caused irritation and frustration to local fishermen because their presence seemed to drive away other fish species that used to abound in the bay.

'Labong-labong'

A Sual resident said instead of fish, the fishermen catch jellyfish known locally as "labong-labong." These are thrown away or left to disintegrate in the beaches.

Westly Rosario, chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Research Center in Dagupan City, said "jellyfish blooms" occur when the climatic condition becomes conducive for them to multiply.

The jellyfish, which are 95- to 99-percent water, congregate in cove areas with plenty of zooplankton and small fish that serve as their food, he said.

A study commissioned by the Mirant Sual Corp., the plant's owner, showed that "large numbers of jellyfish seasonally occur in the bay during the months of November to April."

The study said the jellyfish's "large population is (a) natural event that has occurred long before the establishment of the power plant in the area."

The Sual resident, however, claimed that it was only during the plant's operations that jellyfish "bloomed" in the area.

"While it is true that the jellyfish have been present in the area even before the plant was built, they definitely were not that plentiful and that big," the resident said.

Fish cages

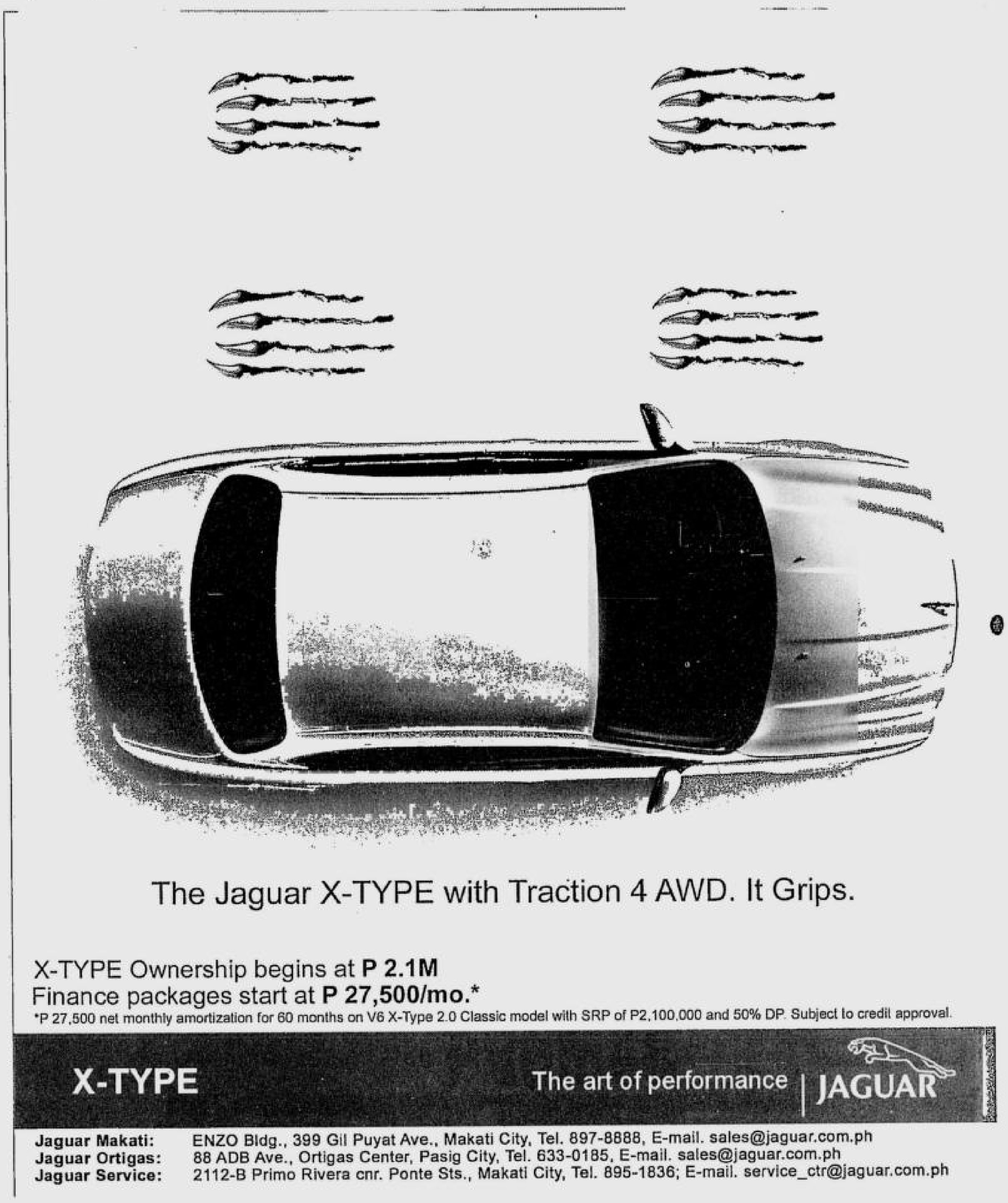
The presence of fish cages in the Sual waters could also have contributed to the seasonal jellyfish blooms because of organic matter that contributes to the reproduction of phytoplankton.

Phytoplankton serves as food of zooplankton, the main food of the jellyfish, Rosario said.

When the Sual power plant management claimed that jellyfish had caused the Luzon-wide power failure on Dec. 10, 1999, many people raised their eyebrows in disbelief.

But Joyce Gacutan, press relations officer of the Mirant Sual Corp., explained that on that day, there was a jellyfish bloom, a "seasonal occurrence in the bay" which the management did not take into consideration when the plant was designed.

"The management did not know then that jellyfish abound in the bay during some months of the year," Gacutan said.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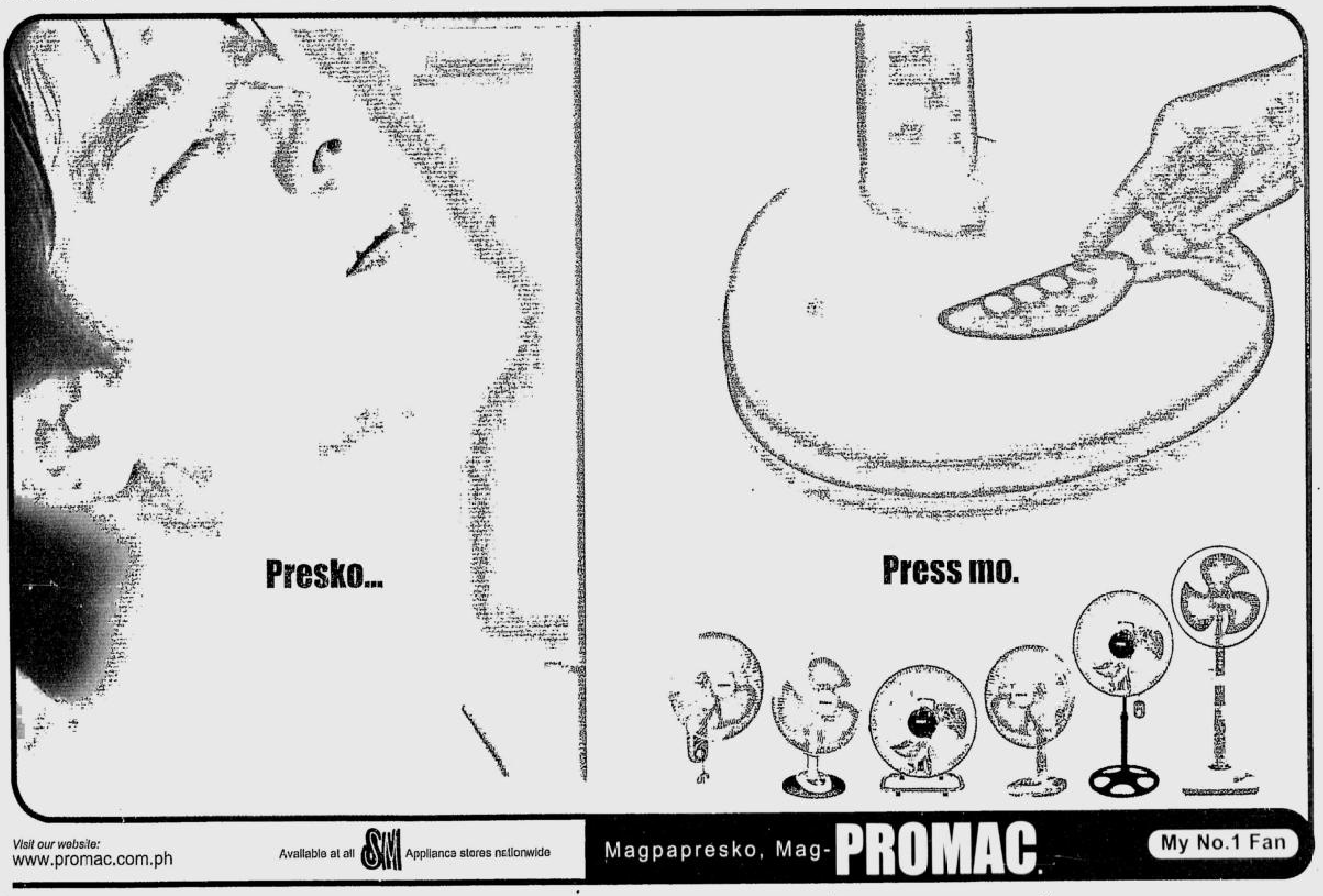
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Bedlam in Baghdad: Intense, massive looting

From page A1

is absolutely no security on the street," said Veronique Taveau, spokeswoman for the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq.

"Humanitarian assistance will be hurt."

US President George W. Bush promised Iraqis the United States and its allies would help end the chaos.

"Coalition forces will help maintain law and order, so that Iraqis can live in security," Bush said in a taped message.

The United States is trying to organize a meeting of Iraqi opposition leaders in the next few days to start the process of selecting an interim government.

Victory in Mosul

Elsewhere, US and Kurdish forces took Iraq's third city of Mosul without a fight yesterday, sealing their victory in the north.

US special forces had entered and taken control of the key northern oil city, US officials said, after Kurdish fighters reportedly entered overnight.

US troops were also in control of the nearby oil-rich city of Kirkuk, Major Rumi Nielson-Green at the US central command in Qatar said. The city was seized by Kurdish fighters on Thursday, a day after Saddam Hussein's regime collapsed.

Kurdish guerrillas said they would hand over the important oil hub, traditional capital of the Kurds, to US troops later yesterday.

Rampant looting

In Baghdad, Iraqi gunmen, apparently from the long oppressed Shi'ite majority in the east-side slums, battled Fedayeen paramilitaries loyal to Saddam overnight, US military sources said.

Two days after US forces drove tanks into the heart of Baghdad, the whereabouts of Saddam and other former Iraqi leaders were still unknown.

But US General Tommy Franks, commander of US forces in Iraq, said yesterday the leadership of the regime in Iraq was "either dead or running like hell."

"That is the case with the leadership of the regime inside Iraq," he said.

Franks said a gunbattle at a Baghdad mosque on Thursday came in response to US intelligence that Iraqi leaders were sheltering in the area, adding that the search for Saddam and his associates would continue.

"We have at any given point in time two to three, in some cases more, sets of intelligence that will indicate regime targets in Baghdad proper, as well as in a great many places inside Iraq," he said.

THE PLAYBOY son of Saddam Hussein, Uday, lived in splendor in this palace in Baghdad. After US forces took it over, the guys toast their good luck by the poolside bar. GETTY IMAGES

"The engagement (at the mosque) was in response to intelligence that indicated leadership in this general area," he said, stressing that US forces had come under fire from within the mosque itself.

"That (search) is going to continue. We are going to keep going and we're going to keep looking," he said.

In efforts to hunt down deposed Iraqi leaders, a US aircraft hit the residence of Barzan Ibrahim Hasan al-Tikriti, Saddam's half-brother and former head of Iraq's Mukhabarat intelligence service, with six "smart bombs."

The results of the attack on the building, which was also an operations center for the intelligence service, were not yet known. There was no indication US forces thought Saddam might be in the house near Ramadi, 110 km west of Baghdad.

Cities fall in north

US troops moved to take control of the strategic prize of Kirkuk and began by spreading through the oil fields near the city, which provide 40 percent of Iraq's oil revenue. Hundreds of dejected Iraqis were seen walking south.

The Kurds have promised to leave Kirkuk, helping to calm Turkish alarm after the Kurdish "peshmerga" militia took it over in a largely bloodless rout of Iraqi forces.

"Yes, we expect to be leaving when the Americans arrive, and that may well be later today," said Mam Rostam, a Kurdish commander whose forces had rushed into Kirkuk, apparently without the full agreement of Washington.

Ankara fears the Kurds could use the city's wealth to finance an independent state and stimulate separatist demands by Turkey's large Kurdish minority.

A Kurdish commander at a checkpoint just outside Mosul said fighters loyal to Saddam had fled. Correspondents in Mosul said they saw no fighting but crowds went on a looting rampage, stripping buildings bare and torching a central market.

Events in the north left Saddam's home town of Tikrit, which is 175 km north of Baghdad on the main road from Mosul, as the one significant target left to the US-led forces. Mosul is 390 north of the capital.

Mob kills Shi'ite leader

In Najaf on Thursday, a mob stabbed and shot to death Iraqi Shi'ite leader Abdul Majid al-Khoei and an aide in the gold-domed Imam Ali Mosque, the city's holiest shrine. The killings seemed certain to widen divisions and sow hatred among Shi'ites, who are 60 percent of the population.

Abdul Majid returned to Iraq only last week but his presence provoked intense criticism from other Iraqi Shi'ite dissidents keen to assert their authority after the fall of Saddam.

A suicide bomber detonated explosives at a US checkpoint in the capital on Thursday evening. "Some are dead in the attack but I don't know how many," Marine officer Matt Baker said. A Pentagon spokesman said four soldiers were wounded.

Fear of another suicide attack led US Marines to open fire on a vehicle which ignored warnings to stop at a checkpoint in the southern city of Nassiriya yesterday and two children inside were killed, the Marines said.

Latest figures for US war losses list 105 dead and 11 missing. Thirty British troops have been killed. There is no authoritative estimate for Iraqi military and civilian casualties but they certainly run into the thousands.

A humanitarian effort to bring food and other supplies to Iraq was beginning. Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke said a British ship unloaded more than 200,000 tons of food, water and medicine at the southern port of Umm Qasr.

The United States has still not confirmed finding any of the weapons of mass destruction it says Iraq had been hiding—the issue which prompted the invasion.

Reuters, AFP

BBC NEWS 24
LIVE
US officials say the Baghdad operation is a
07:37
'show of force' that sends a powerful message

THE FAMILIAR face of Mohammed Saeed-al-Sahaf, the Iraqi minister of information, mouthing with endless enthusiasm his outrageously familiar lies during one of his daily briefings. AFP

Sahaf morphs into . . .

From page A1

PR history, Sahaf confidently boasted during his daily briefings that Baghdad was safe and the invaders would be slaughtered, even as US tanks rumbled down streets nearby.

"The infidels are committing suicide by the hundreds on the gates of Baghdad," he told reporters, despite Iraqi troops blatantly running for cover on the other side of the river.

Television news junkies transfixed by Sahaf's daily briefings are now logging onto a day-old website featuring his finest invective against US and British "infidels." The site, (http://www.WeLoveTheIraqiInformationMinister.com), is a "coalition effort of bloodthirsty hawks and ineffectual doves" united in their admiration for al-Sahaf and his pronouncements, such as: "I now inform you that you are too far from reality."

Among al-Sahaf's now-famous declarations was: "There are no American infidels in Baghdad. Never!"

Donning his trademark beret and cheeky smile, the jovial minister is pictured in various poses before he disappeared this week as US-led troops tightened their grip on Baghdad.

Cult figure

Sahaf became a cult figure on television with his daily briefings, appearing from behind a sea of microphones as he condemned the American "infidels" and often flatly denied what viewers around the world saw unfolding on their TV screens.

Listing his "all time greats," the Sahaf website includes: "God will roast their stomachs in hell at the hands of Iraqis" and "Our initial assessment is that they will all die."

Writer and former Greenpeace activist Kieran Mulvaney, a Briton living in Alaska, said he and friends got the idea for the site while watching cable news coverage of the three-week-old war.

"I mentioned to one of my friends that the best part is watching this guy," Mulvaney told Reuters on Thursday. "He is so brazen that I could almost admire him."

Website 'exploded'

Mulvaney and his friends designed, built and put up the site in three days. Within hours of going live on the Internet, the site "has exploded," Mulvaney said.

The same day, US troops marched into Baghdad and al-Sahaf disappeared, or in the view of his new website, went on "administrative leave."

"I hope he is alive somewhere so he knows how famous he has become," Mulvaney said. "We've had all kinds of e-mail from literally all over the world. We even had a few e-mails from within the Pentagon saying, 'We really like this guy and we miss him.'"

The site already is offering T-shirts and mugs bearing al-Sahaf's best-loved statements ("My feelings—as usual—we will slaughter them all!") and has selected actor and director Sydney Pollack to play the information minister in the Hollywood version of the war.

Spare Sahaf campaign

Internet message boards have also been packed with debates over the celebrity minister's unconventional PR techniques.

One writer imagined Sahaf explaining a troubled economy: "We do not have economic problems! These infidels, the waste of maggots they are, are deceiving us with facts and their charts. This graph they showed us was upside down!" the posting read.

Mulvaney said he would appeal for sightings of al-Sahaf, and there are plans to poll fans about what the beret-wearing minister should do after the war.

One fan has advocated an urgent campaign to spare al-Sahaf if he is found: "He is too much of a global asset to be murdered/shot/stabbed or otherwise wasted."

Reuters

Sale of 7 US properties in US to net ₱3.3 billion

From page A1

hiya na ang Pilipinas. And if they're selling the properties to acquire other properties then *delikado* (it's dangerous)," Tatad told the Inquirer. "Lagareng Hapon 'yan. *Kita dito, kita doon*."

Tatad has asked the Senate to immediately launch an inquiry into the proposed sale, which he believed was "totally dirty."

But Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto, of the government's Privatization Council, contested Tatad's claim, saying there was "no rush" in the disposition of the seven pieces of property.

"The rush here is we want to get all this information done (referring to, among others, property valuation and the terms of reference for the bidding) so that we can arrive at a decision soon whether we proceed or not. That's the long and short of it," he said.

Last March 25, Ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario directed four Philippine diplomatic missions in the United States to "prepare and submit soonest to the embassy a copy of the disposition plan for the specific property within your mission's respective jurisdictions."

Del Rosario said "it will be desirable for the posts, in coordination with the embassy, to have implemented the plan, even if it is only a partial implementation, in time for the President's state visit to the US." President Macapagal-Arroyo was to have visited the United States in the first week of April, but postponed her trip because of the war in Iraq.

But Recto said that during council meetings, "there's no discussion whatsoever that (sale) has to be done because of a trip deadline. My mandate, in particular, is to ensure whatever effort is undertaken with the greatest degree of transparency and fairness and to give the government the best value for its assets."

"I have no other marching orders as far as the disposition of the property is concerned," Recto said.

Tatad assailed Del Rosario, whom he accused of suspiciously rushing the sale. "Albert is the problem. His credentials are suspect because he was once a property developer. He's into real estate," said the opposition politician.

The Inquirer has learned, however, that Vice President Teofisto Guingona had originally recommended to Macapagal the sale of prime Philippine properties in Houston and Seattle, to help plug the budget deficit.

Selling the properties may raise about $59.57 million (approximately P3.3 billion), the "greater part" of which will be used in reducing the deficit, Del Rosario wrote the President last Nov. 8.

"(After) factoring the maximum 30 percent down payment ($18 million) for the acquisition of the relevant replacement properties, there will be a balance of approximately $47 million that would be available to reduce the budget deficit," Del Rosario claimed.

Portions of the sales proceeds will also be used to acquire "more desirable (real estate) with better terms" for the Philippine consulates in Los Angeles, Chicago and New York as well as the country's permanent representative to the United Nations, also in New York City, Del Rosario wrote.

Malacañang sources have furnished the Inquirer a copy of the memorandum (sent through Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo), among other documents.

"Disposing of these properties and replacing them with more suitable properties that are relatively repair-free and low maintenance would relieve the Philippine government and (the) foreign service of the perennial problem of ever increasing expenditures for repair and maintenance of underutilized and deteriorating assets," the envoy also said.

Seven properties

The six other pieces of property, according to the Privatization Council, are the following:

- A 4,350-square-foot property in Houston, Texas with an assessed value of $388,000. It is located on Glen Haven St., a prime location. It was acquired by the government in 1979 and used as the official residence of the Philippine consul general. After the mission's closure in 1995, the property "has been uninhabited and has deteriorated progressively through the years."
- A 4,800-sq.-ft. vacant lot on 620 Terry Avenue in Seattle with an assessed value of $240,000. It was purchased by the government more than two decades ago as the intended site of the Philippine consulate in Washington state. But the plan never materialized.
- The Philippine Center on New York City's Fifth Avenue, which has a total area of more than 47,300 square feet over the building's seven floors. Acquired in the early 1970s, it houses the offices of the Philippine consulate general, the Permanent Mission to the UN, Philippine Center Management Board and the Commission on Audit's international division, among others. But the property, which has an estimated fair market value of $22.7 million to $25 million, has tax liabilities of $14 million.
- The Philippine Center buildings on 445-447 Sutter St. which is in the center of San Francisco's business district. The property, which houses the Philippine consulate, among other government offices, has a fair market value of about $13 million.
- The old chancery building on 1617 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington DC, said to be worth at least $2.98 million. The property has been idle since 1992 when the Philippine embassy moved to the new chancery across the street.
- A residential home on 945 Timber Hill Road in Highland Park, an hour's drive from the Philippine consulate in Chicago. The property, valued at $450,000, was acquired by the government sometime in the early 1990s through a real estate mortgage loan with the New York branch of the Philippine National Bank. The loan has an outstanding balance of $253,000.

No decision

Recto said the Privatization Council "has not made a decision to sell."

"At this point, we're not sure yet. Are we going to develop or sell the property? We haven't gotten to that point," said Recto, who jointly oversees the disposition of the properties with Del Rosario.

Recto said some people had been "putting the cart ahead of the horse" and emphasized that "it might be premature for any negative conclusions to be made at this point."

Recto said that "disposition can be achieved in a number of ways. We can dispose by way of leasing, joint venture developments, build-operate-transfer schemes or by outright sale," among others.

"There are a number of options that I think will be made available to us which will be best arrived at when we have the benefit of a third party adviser or consultant to help us arrive at those conclusions," he said. "On a scale of one to 10, we've just passed number one which is having agreed to take the necessary studies to get us to a point where we can decide what to do next."

On Tatad's assertion that the timing was wrong for the disposition of the properties because US property values are down, Recto said otherwise.

He argued that "US property values may be off their peak, but if you'll compare what those values are today versus what they were five years ago then you'll most likely conclude it's still a good time to enter into disposition transactions."

"Despite 9/11 the New York real estate market has not deteriorated," Recto noted. *With a report from contributor Rita Villadiego in New York*

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GMA sparks SARS scare

From page A1

no SARS. It's all differential diagnosis, circumstantial evidence."

Dayrit said at the teleconference that until a diagnostic tool for the disease was found, all suspect cases were called "probable SARS cases."

But Dr. Maria Consortia Quizon, president of the National Epidemiology Center, told the INQUIRER: "It's SARS. It's a SARS case. We count it as SARS."

She said, however, that Dayrit was also right in calling it a "probable SARS case" because there was yet no confirmatory test for the disease.

"So, strictly speaking, it is a probable SARS case," she said.

But in a separate interview, Quizon said on reports that some of those who had undergone "observation" for SARS were being discriminated against, Quizon said it indicated that they had to work harder to tell people there was yet no confirmed case of SARS in the country.

After learning of the foreigner's case, the President allocated P500 million to upgrade the SARS-management facilities of San Lazaro Hospital in Manila and the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine in Alabang.

She appealed to those who have traveled to SARS-infected areas to immediately seek treatment as soon as symptoms appear.

She also ordered all Philippine consulates to report daily any new reported SARS cases in the past 10 days; required airlines from Hong Kong, China and Singapore to strictly screen Philippine-bound passengers before departure and bar those with possible SARS symptoms from boarding; and ordered airports in Manila, Cebu and Laoag to strictly screen arrivals from cities with known SARS cases.

Shopping in HK

Dayrit said at the teleconference that the foreigner had been dividing his time between Manila and Hong Kong.

"A week before he became ill, he went shopping in Hong Kong," Dayrit said. "When he came back a few days later, he developed fever. He sought a physician, and was immediately confined."

Dayrit said the foreigner was diagnosed with a possible "hemophilus influenza," an infection of the respiratory tract, and was given antibiotics. "However, his clinical course was not consistent with hemophilus influenza," so doctors suspected possible SARS.

In a phone interview, Dayrit reiterated that the foreigner did not experience "respiratory difficulty."

He said the man's X-ray also did not show a pattern distinct in SARS patients, and surmised that the man's "immune system may have been strong."

Dayrit said the man had been "without fever for 48 hours, and should have been allowed to go home today (Friday)."

But the President advised them to keep the man in the hospital for seven days more to enable doctors to "track his clinical symptoms" for a longer period of time, Dayrit said.

"We have actually observed him, and lucky for us, he had not developed any severe respiratory illness . . . no respiratory difficulty," the health secretary said.

The man has been asked to list the people he had contact with, although he has supposedly claimed to have met only with a few people since arriving here.

"He was always on the move," Dayrit said. "He didn't stay long in a place with anyone."

Dayrit made the assurance that there was little chance of the foreigner having spread the virus.

"You are not contagious until you become symptomatic of SARS," Dayrit said. "It's when you develop respiratory symptoms that you become highly contagious."

Quizon also said the foreigner's X-ray had shown symptoms of "ordinary pneumonia," and not the distinct SARS pattern.

"But when you see pneumonia in the X-ray of a person who has cough and fever, who came from a SARS-infected area, then it strengthens the diagnosis that it is SARS," she said.

GOOD news and bad: President Macapagal and Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit at the so-called War Room in the Palace. EDWIN BACASMAS

Impact on ecotourism

At a press conference, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon said the global effects of SARS on ecotourism would be a major topic at the forthcoming meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders in Bali.

"Tourism will not stop just because there is a terrorist attack, SARS, the Iraq war or certain problems that are happening in the world," said Gordon, who is scheduled to leave for Bali today to assume his post as the new chair of the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

Philippine tourism "remains still a little bit ahead of others in terms of growth, although volume-wide other territories are better," he said, recalling that the country posted a 2-percent growth in tourism in the first quarter.

Gordon said the global media networks had identified the Philippines as SARS-infected. While the reports were later denied, he said, "the damage has already been done."

"The country is SARS-free, and we should tell the world about it," he said.

Gordon also advocated the issuance of a travel advisory, not a ban, on tourists coming from SARS-affected countries like Hong Kong, China and Singapore.

He said travel bans should not be issued because he did not believe that "the danger is so great."

But he called for "extraordinary diligence in the reception of tourists or returning residents."

Gordon warned Ilocos Norte officials against barring residents of China, Taiwan and Hong Kong from landing at the Laoag International Airport.

"There could be retaliatory moves, especially since many people from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other countries with SARS cases go to the Philippines to invest here," he said.

Dayrit also told the INQUIRER that there was no need to ban the entry here of people from SARS-infected countries.

"If you do that, people will only find ways to enter the country through different routes," he said. "If you ban travel from Hong Kong, travelers there will enter the country through Macau."

Protocols

At the press conference with Gordon, Manila International Airport Authority general manager Edgardo Manda said he would fly to Hong Kong today to discuss with his counterpart protocols on the examination of airline passengers who might be afflicted with SARS.

Manda said the discussion was urgent, especially with the expected influx of Filipino workers from overseas for the Holy Week break.

He said he wanted a "double screening" of returning workers—at the Hong Kong airport and at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"We want to establish a common ground so that we would be screening passengers using the same standards," he said.

Elsewhere, Interior Secretary Jose Lina directed all local officials, as well as all Department of Interior and Local Government personnel, to suspend their trips abroad, especially to SARS-affected countries.

He said this was in line with the government's campaign to prevent the outbreak of SARS here.

"This is only temporary," Lina said. "As soon as an advisory is issued by competent authorities that travel to countries affected with SARS is safe, we shall lift the suspension." *With reports from Anne Luisa E. Villarico, Marlet D. Salazar and Jerome Aning*

Filipina seriously ill in HK

HONG KONG—A Filipino SARS patient is in "critical" condition in a government hospital's intensive care unit.

C.Y., 57, was admitted to the United Christian Hospital on March 30 with high fever and shortness of breath. She was taken to the ICU when her condition worsened.

Her fever has since dropped and her blood pressure is normal. But her breathing continues to be difficult.

"Her condition is critical," said the hospital's press relations officer.

Another member of the hospital staff said the woman "is currently being aided by a mechanical ventilator with a strong oxygen support." She is also taking ribavirin, an anti-viral drug used to treat SARS patients, and antibiotics.

C.Y., who is married to a Chinese resident, is one of the 120 SARS patients receiving treatment in public hospitals in Hong Kong. It is not known where and how she contracted the disease.

Philippine Consul General Victoria Bataclan confirmed that C.Y. was being treated as a SARS patient. "We are monitoring her condition every day," she said.

Bataclan denied reports that the number of Filipino SARS patients had risen to 25, and said there were only seven confirmed Filipino cases.

In Manila, President Macapagal-Arroyo appealed to Filipinos abroad not to come home for the Holy Week if they had SARS symptoms, to prevent infecting others.

"I will never, never prevent a Filipino from coming home, but please be guided by a genuine concern for others, especially your own loved ones," Ms Macapagal said in a statement.

She asked them to stay put and wait until they recovered before coming home.

"This is one sacrifice I am asking for the sake of our country," she said. *Gal R. Roma of Hong Kong News, contributor; Dona Z. Pazzibugan in Manila*

Meralco's serious financial woes worry Palace

From page A1

"We have to maintain the viability of Meralco," Cuna said.

Meralco is "very seriously financially affected" by the high court's decision, said Cuna. The refund could cost as much as P29 billion, consumer groups have said.

In London, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said yesterday that it was currently reviewing Meralco's financial and operating position, in response to the SC decision. Given Meralco's already weak liquidity position, immediate enforcement of the refund could negatively affect the rating on the company.

The other day, Meralco president Jesus Francisco said the company would be unable to make a one-time payment, warning that such a huge refund could lead to its bankruptcy.

"We are in deep financial problem right now. We are in restructuring mode with our creditors, which is worsened by the court's decision," Cuna said.

Congress reaction

Administration Rep. Raul Gonzalez, deputy speaker for the Visayas, joined opposition legislators in calling on Meralco to implement the refund. But he went a step further. He urged Meralco to return, not only the excess charges, but also the interest the money may have earned through bank deposits or company investments.

"They (Meralco officials) should account (for) whether they deposited money (from the excess charges) in banks or account for investments using this money," Gonzalez said in a phone interview yesterday.

He wondered, for instance, whether the money was used in other Lopez investments such as the Rockwell Power Plant, a high-end mall in Makati City.

"The people should not demand only the P28-billion refund but demand a refund of the interest of the money," Gonzalez said.

But opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. took a more measured approach, calling on Meralco to spread the refund over a longer period to preserve the company's viability.

Pimentel said Meralco and its customers can work out a plan for the refund of the over-billings in a way that will not endanger the company's financial condition.

"My suggestion is for Meralco to enter into an agreement with its customers, subject to the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission, by which they could be refunded in the form of reductions in their monthly electric billings," he said.

He said another mode was to give the customers the option to convert the refundable amounts into shares of stocks in Meralco, thereby broadening the company's ownership base.

Pimentel noted that Meralco was not required to give a one-shot refund to its customers, saying the high court's ruling allows flexibility in the manner of enforcing the refund to prevent the company from going bankrupt.

Leticia Ibay, ERC officer in charge, said the quasi-judicial body would ask Meralco for its ideas on how to implement the refund.

But Ibay also said that, in the past, the agency allowed overcharges to be refunded over a period that was proportionate to the period the overcharges were collected. This would mean that the Meralco refund would be spread over nine years, since the excess charges were collected starting March 1994.

Consumer groups

But a consumer group yesterday pushed for an immediate, lump-sum refund of P10 billion to Meralco's residential customers, even as another group said the entire amount, some P28 billion, belonged only to small consumers.

The People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (Power) said it preferred the lump-sum cash refund. Other possible modes of refund, it said, could take the form of cash refunds spread over one to three years; reductions in monthly bills spread over one to three years; and stock options for consumers.

"Any of these modes would cost Meralco P10.5 billion, an amount that it could very well afford," said engineer Ramon Ramirez, one of the convenors of Power. "Refunds to commercial and industrial users could be made later."

But Pete Ilagan, president of the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, said Meralco's commercial and industrial customers had no right to any share of the refund since they had already passed on the cost of electricity to consumers of their products and services.

"This is why we have been saying all along that Meralco was lying when it said a refund gave ordinary consumers false hopes," Ilagan said.

He reiterated his call for Malacañang to issue an executive order forming a "Consumer's Power Commission"—consisting of consumer and civil society groups—which would manage the refund.

Power and the Samahan ng Nagtataguyod sa Agham at Teknolohiya para sa Sambayanan also demanded that the 16.7-centavo-per-kilowatthour in overcharges be removed immediately from Meralco's monthly billing.

"This will result in an instant reduction in power bills, a much-deserved reprieve for consumers who for nine years have been robbed by Meralco," said Ramirez.

The engineer added: "Meralco should not play the role of a victim and instead prepare to return its loot." *With reports from AFP; Christine Avendaño, Cynthia Balana, Ronnel Domingo and Gerald G. Lacuarta*

'Meralco formula' may hike power rates in provinces

BAGUIO CITY—The "Meralco situation" may lead to increased power rates in the provinces.

The Supreme Court decision ordering the Manila Electric Co. to implement a refund said it would be "a dangerous precedent" if Meralco were allowed to "treat income tax as operating cost." But the Energy Regulatory Commission had advised rural electric cooperatives last year to compute their electricity bills according to the Meralco formula for calculating the return on rate base, the industry's measure of profitability, once the RECs are converted into stock corporations.

None of the RECs has so far converted into stock corporations or stock cooperatives, said Gerardo Versoza, general manager of the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Beneco).

Meralco and ERC continue to insist that income taxes are part of their recoverable expenditures.

"If we start computing Beneco's current electricity billing cycle using the RORB, we would actually get a -7 percent rate. This tells us that Beneco's rates are far, far lower than Meralco's rates," Versoza said.

"But I don't really know what the ERC will be imposing or what rate structure it will apply (given its position on income taxes)," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Amnesty Int'l 'shocked' by RP treatment of young offenders

From page A1

partially investigate any allegation of torture and ill-treatment of (arrested or detained) children."

In the 18-page report released last night, AI detailed reports of human rights violations against child suspects and offenders upon their arrest, detention and sentencing.

AI said the Philippines was one of the first countries in Asia to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990 and lauded its many national executive orders and laws which provide for the welfare and protection of children, including those "in conflict with the law."

But it noted that in practice, key provisions in these orders and laws like access to social workers and legal counsel, detention as a last resort, and prompt charging before the proper authorities are "regularly violated."

The AI is concerned because most children committing crimes belong to the marginalized and disadvantaged sectors of a society.

The AI report cited, for instance, that majority of Filipino children in detention appeared to have been arrested without warrants because they were reportedly caught while committing a crime, like vagrancy and substance abuse (usually sniffing glue).

A child's language

Philippine law also requires authorities to immediately inform these children, "in a language that they understand," why they are being arrested, but AI said that based on its interviews with nongovernment organizations this was not being observed .

Likewise, it said, authorities do not establish whether or not the suspect they arrested is below 18 years. This raises fears that many children in conflict with the law "may be treated and detained as adults until they are brought to a judicial authority."

AI is also alarmed about reports of torture or ill-treatment of child suspects, citing cases where they are punched, slapped, their fingernails singed with a lit cigarette, given electric shocks and their heads shaved as punishment.

"AI is also aware of reports of psychological torture and intimidation . . . including taking child suspects to graveyards, threatening them with guns or threatening that they will be subjected to the death penalty," the report said.

These human rights violations against children were committed by barangay tanods and police officers.

No social worker, lawyer

In addition, the AI said authorities fail to notify parents or guardians as well as the Department of Social Welfare and Development about the arrest of these children.

The report said AI has documented cases in which children have been detained for weeks and months and, in one case, more than a year without a social worker visiting the child.

Authorities likewise do not provide legal counsel for child suspects upon their arrest or brought immediately to a judicial official, thus violating their right to challenge the legality of their detention.

AI noted with "grave concern" cases where children are detained in "adult facilities," subjected to torture and exposed to unsanitary conditions.

"Such intimate and constant contact with adult detainees can impact on a child's life in a number of damaging ways," AI said. "In the absence of other forms of education, children learn from their adult criminal suspect companions, and some children are reportedly recruited into gangs."

The report also noted cases where some child offenders receive adult sentences and are detained without being sentenced. AI said it has information indicating that eight child offenders have been sentenced to death; it recommended that these sentences be commuted instead.

Canadian PM visits Chinatown to dispel killer pneumonia threat

TORONTO—Canada's prime minister paid a surprise visit Thursday to one of Toronto's normally bustling Chinatowns, seeking to persuade Canadians not to let the mysterious SARS virus derail their everyday lives.

Jean Chretien brought members of his Liberal caucus to dine with community leaders in Chinatown East, a colorful district where exotic fruits and vegetables are piled up outside chaotic shops selling everything from woks to watermelons.

"There is no danger. All the precautions have been taken. I think I wanted to [set] an example," Chretien told reporters before a meal of spring rolls, sweet and sour pork and barbecue duck at the Luen Fat Seafood and BBQ Restaurant.

After the meal—which cost C$200 ($130) for 30 guests—Chretien scrambled across mounds of melting snow to shake hands with cheering onlookers.

"I think everybody should do the same thing in Toronto," he shouted, insisting that residents of Canada's largest city had no reason to be afraid of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Canada is the only country outside Asia where people have died of SARS, and community officials say ethnic Chinese people have been blamed by some for spreading the disease.

Jan Wu, owner of the Golden Embassy restaurant in Chinatown East, said business had suffered terribly in the past few weeks. Her 150-seat restaurant, normally packed with lunchtime diners, had just eight customers at noon on Thursday. *Reuters*

HER employer having decided to leave the SARS-infected Block E of Amoy Gardens in Hong Kong, this Filipina domestic worker has to pack up and go where she can find employment. DANTE PERALTA/PINOY ABROAD

Singapore puts SARS suspects on camera

From page A1

China's Guangdong province.

Police and border crossing control points were alerted after the man's escape, leading to his arrest, the Chinese-language Sing Tao daily said.

SARS has so far claimed 31 deaths in Hong Kong, with nearly 1,000 people infected, a quarter of them health workers.

Hong Kong announced Thursday further measures to combat the disease by ordering all household contacts of confirmed SARS patients to confine themselves at home for up to 10 days. Violators face a maximum fine of $HK5,000 and six months' imprisonment.

In Singapore, where the number of those on home quarantine has more than doubled to 490, the government said a private security company would install Internet-linked "Webcams" in homes to ensure that people suspected of SARS infection would stay inside.

It also said an electronic wrist band designed to send a signal if anyone tried to leave their home would be imposed on offenders.

At least nine people have broken home quarantine since March 24, despite the threat of fines up to S$10,000.

Nine other people in Singapore have died of SARS. But around two-thirds of those diagnosed with SARS there have recovered.

In the United States, federal officials said Thursday SARS may have spread for the first time in a workplace there.

Dr. Julie Gerberding, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), said a suspected SARS patient who became ill after traveling to Asia might have infected a co-worker in Florida.

In Indonesia, health ministry spokesperson Mariani Reksoprodjo yesterday confirmed the country's first SARS case—a 47-year-old British businessman who had visited Hong Kong and Singapore before arriving in Indonesia and had been in a Jakarta hospital since April 9.

Reksoprodjo said nine other people with SARS-like symptoms were under observation.

Indonesia now joins 18 other countries that have reported SARS cases. The disease has claimed at least 111 lives worldwide and sickened more 2,700 people. China and Hong Kong, Canada, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia have reported deaths, with the highest number in China and Hong Kong.

'Very new disease'

Singapore said new cases of the lethal virus rose by seven on Thursday to 133, including five who caught it at the nation's biggest hospital.

But authorities said they could have found the source of an alarming jump in cases at the Singapore General Hospital, saying a man in his 60s admitted for other medical problems but later diagnosed with SARS, might have passed it on.

"SARS is a very, very new disease and we are learning that it can present itself in very atypical ways, particularly in patients with other types of medical conditions," the Ministry of Health said.

The man had spent time previously at a hospital dealing now only with SARS victims.

In the United States, the CDC's Gerberding said she was "very concerned" about the possible spread of the disease and said the case in Gainesville, Florida, was being investigated.

A 47-year-old woman is believed to have been infected at work by a 60-year-old woman, said Tom Belcuore, director of the Alachua County health department.

The workplace spread was found during the health department's routine investigation of one worker's contacts. The health investigators discovered a co-worker who had a respiratory illness and put that person on the list of suspected SARS cases.

"It is far too early to know if any of these workers have SARS," Gerberding said.

But just in case, she said, the CDC would post new guidance regarding SARS patients for schools and the workplace.

Until now, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome had appeared to spread only to family members or health workers who have had close contact with an infected person.

So far, a dozen people in the United States—nine family members and three health workers—had been infected in that manner. The rest of the 166 suspected cases there involve people who were infected while traveling in Asia.

Blood donations

In Canada, the federal health department announced restrictions on blood donors to prevent any SARS-tainted donations.

While saying that no evidence exists of SARS being transmitted through blood, Dr. Paul Gully said the health agency would refuse donations from people who traveled in the last 10 days to afflicted Asian nations.

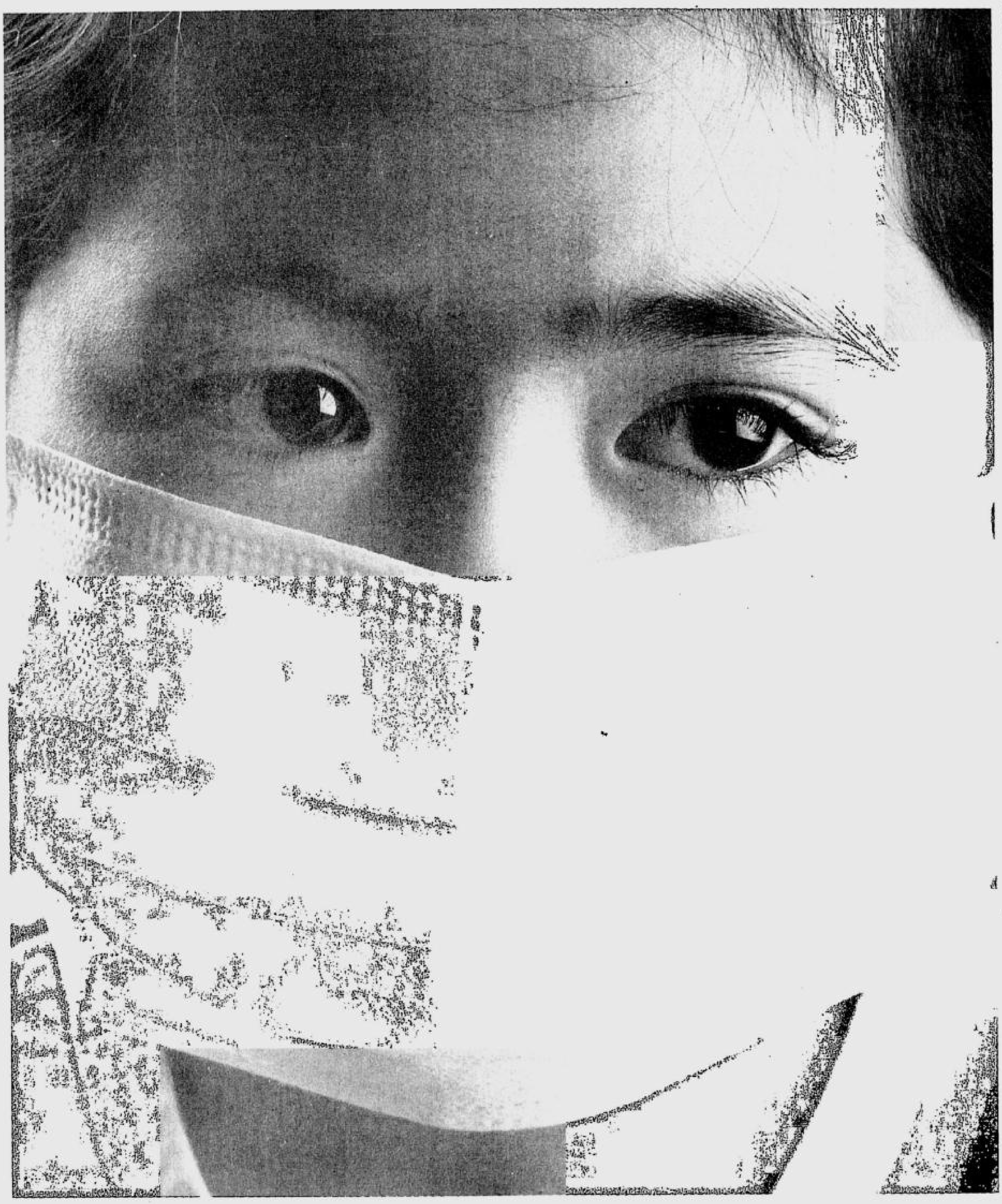
Anyone who has been at one of the Toronto area hospitals under quarantine because of SARS will also be prohibited from donating blood, Gully said.

Most of Canada's 253 probable or suspected SARS cases are in Toronto, and health authorities reported 11 more probable and suspected cases Thursday.

Probable cases are those displaying symptoms who traveled recently in afflicted areas of Asia or were exposed to the illness. Suspected cases are those displaying symptoms, but with no known travel or exposure history.

On Wednesday, Toronto and Ontario province health officials closed a school and advised almost 200 people to go into a 10-day quarantine because of possible exposure from people who failed to isolate themselves as instructed.

The quarantine is for anyone possibly exposed to the illness, and thousands of people in Toronto have been advised to observe it since SARS first appeared almost a month ago. *Inquirer wires*



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Fastest couple having baby

SYDNEY—The world's fastest lovers, Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery, are having a baby, according to a newspaper report here on Wednesday. Jones has told friends she is pregnant and will not compete this year, the Daily Telegraph reported. Olympic 100m champion Jones and 100m world record-holder Montgomery are said to be thrilled. *AFP*

BUHAIN CONCERN

NSAs warned on SARS

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said he will recommend to the national sports associations to postpone their participation in countries that have cases of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

"The PSC doesn't want to take chances when it comes to the health of some 300 national athletes," Buhain told the INQUIRER.

Though he didn't give any figures, the PSC chief said national teams go out to compete abroad almost every week.

And most of their destinations are nearby countries were SARS cases are reported like China, Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam, the site of the Southeast Asian Games in December.

"It will have an effect on our preparation for the Vietnam SEA Games, but we can always compete in some other countries which have about the same level of competition," said Buhain.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit said the SARS issue will be tackled on April 25 when the SEA Games Federation convenes in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

"I don't know if it's pushing through and if other countries are willing to attend," said Dayrit, considering that Vietnam has several SARS cases. "But I just might attend if needed be."

Buhain said he is hoping things will improve between now and the SEA Games which is slated Dec. 5-15.

"Surely it would have a big effect on the SEA Games if they still don't develop a vaccine for SARS until December," said Buhain.

Buhain said PSC's concern is always for "the safety of the national athletes."

"It would be very frustrating for the athletes which have been training very hard for the past year," said Buhain. "It's only 238 days to go before SEA Games, and most of them are already on the peak of their preparation."

The country has already scrapped several stints in Singapore and Hong Kong due to SARS scare. *With a report from Alaine Lou Antonio*

MENDENILLA takes a winning leap during the high jump event of the Manila Youth Games. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SPORTSWATCH

Santa Ana stakes races

THE PHILIPPINE Racing Commission (Philracom) will stage two stakes races–the kick-off leg of the 2003 Import Stakes Series and the second leg of the Road to Triple Crown–tomorrow at the Santa Ana Park. Ouzo will stake her unblemished local track record as she challenges six other foreign-bred chargers in the P450,000 all-import stakes. Fresh from three spectacular victories, the 5-year-old dark bay mare by St. Covet out of Aniseed has steadily climbed to the top of the imported horses' category since her smashing local track debut in February.

Prince summer camp

THE SECOND Varsity Volleys-Prince Summer Tennis Camp will be held April 23-May 23 at the Valle Verde Country Club in Pasig City. Top varsity coaches Karl Santamaria (UST), Roland Kraut (DLSU), Dennis Sta. Cruz and Randy de Guzman (Ateneo) will conduct lessons for munchkins (8 years and below) and beginners (7:30-9 a.m.), intermediate and advanced (9-11 a.m.) every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday while night sessions (6-8 p.m.) are on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The camp is supported by Accel and Nassau. Interested parties may contact Mercy (724-0394 and 7226578), Karl (0920-7452180) and Randy (0917-5292371).

De Dios gains finals

NICO Riego de Dios reached the Juntaphil Cup finals with a 6-1, 6-3 victory over Rommel Opiniano yesterday at the Baguio Tennis Club. De Dios will face Jett Tangalin, who survived Marvelous Cortez, 7-5, 4-6, 6-3. Patrick Arevalo blasted Joselito Cortez, 6-0, 6-0, to forge a final duel with Leander Lazaro, a 6-3, 6-1 winner over Pocholo Macalino, in the 12-under class. Macalino bounced back in the unisex 10-under class, beating Clarice Patrimonio, 6-1, 6-0, to advance against Leander Lazaro, a 6-2, 6-4 winner over Maika Tampoco. Bien Zoleta dumped May Herrera, 6-0, 6-1, to advance in the 16-under finals where she will meet Catherine Flores.

Sunrise tennis listing on

INTERESTED parties may still register for the First City Sunrise Junior Tennis Championships slated April 13-16 at the Sunrise Tennis Club covered courts in Maliwalu, Tarlac City. For details, call Philta Region 3 RVP Billy Tanedo (045-9823754 and 045-9827366) and Dan Ilagan (045-9823869).

Chinese runners banned

AMSTERDAM—Two Chinese runners have been asked to pull out of Sunday's Rotterdam marathon over concerns about the spread of the deadly flu-like SARS virus which originated in China, race organizers said on Tuesday. There was no suggestion that either Sun Yingjie or fellow runner Jin-Li were infected with the virus, race director Mario Kadiks said, but the decision had been made to allay potential unease among entries. *Reuters*

Bajar shines as Shell snaps eight-game skid

GAME TODAY
(Bren Guiao Sports Complex, San Fernando, Pampanga)
5 p.m.–Coca-Cola vs Talk N Text

By June Navarro

PLAYING second fiddle on Shell's rotation motivates Rensy Bajar to push his potentials to the limit.

Bajar's hardwork reaped dividends for Shell last night as the Turbochargers beat Purefoods, 68-65. Shell, thus, snapped its eight-game skid in the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Ranged against the 6-foot Noy Castillo, the 5-foot-7 Bajar drilled in 10 of his 14 points in the final period, including a three-point play and a key triple that altered the misfortunes of the Turbochargers.

The Turbochargers improved to 2-8 while the Hotdogs dropped to 4-10.

Later, San Miguel Beer scrambled past Sta. Lucia Realty, 80-77, in overtime to pick up its fifth win in nine games. The Realtors dropped to 5-5.

Lakers, Sixers win

LOS ANGELES- Center Shaquille O'Neal scored 32 points and hauled in 16 rebounds as the Lakers thumped the red hot Sacramento Kings, 117-104, on Thursday.

In Boston, the Philadelphia 76ers rode a 36-22 third quarter to a 99-78 rout of the Celtics. *AP*

Iverson, O'Neal to US '5'

NEW YORK — Allen Iverson and Jermaine O'Neal will be asked to join the 2004 U.S. Olympic men's basketball team, a source told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The decision was made in a conference call among members of the USA Basketball selection committee, a basketball source said. *AP*

Dong formula: Clip Hapee's wings

GAMES TODAY *(San Juan Gym)*
2 p.m.–Montaña vs ICTSI
4 p.m.–John O vs Hapee

By Dennis U. Eroa

JOHN O mentor Dong Vergeire thinks he has the formula to bring Hapee Toothpaste crashing back to earth in the Sunkist-PBL Unity Cup at the San Juan Gym.

"We have a chance if we can clip Hapee's wings," Vergeire, assistant coach of the national men's basketball team, told the INQUIRER. Vergeire said they must stop Hapee shooters Peter June Simon, Allan Salangsang, Mark Saquilayan and Wesley Gonzales.

Riding high on a five-game winning streak, Hapee meets John O (3-1) at 4 p.m. today. The clash will feature two teams with impressive rosters under two bench strategists known for their focus on defense.

ICTSI-Archers, the league's glamor squad, tackles Montaña in the 2 p.m. opener.

Despite a not-so strong lineup, the Archers are getting the respect of the fans with their spirited plays. Dino Aldeguer, Mark Cardona, Joachim Toss and Dominic Uy are playing well for ICTSI.

Coach Franz Pumaren's charges narrowly lost, 61-60, to Blu Star Power on April 6 and are determined to bounce back.

Manila trackster captures 5 golds

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ANTONIO Mendenilla, 15, loved to run as a kid growing in the busy streets of Manila.

He has carried that passion all the way to five gold medals to emerge as one of the prized finds in yesterday's track and field competitions of the Manila Youth Games.

Mendenilla, an incoming high school freshman at the Philippine Christian University, turned the Rizal Memorial oval into his own playground, running away with the gold medal in the 200-meter dash to increase his collection to five.

"I was very active as a kid and I love playing *habulan* with my neighbors," said Mendenilla, who has also won the 100m, long jump, high jump and led the PCU relay team to the 4x100m title.

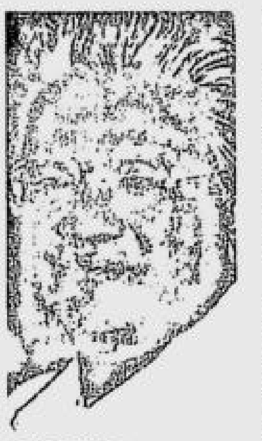
MYG organizer Ali Atienza, chief of the Manila Sports Council, said Mendenilla is only one of the many new faces who will represent the city in national-level competitions.

Sharing the recognition with Mendenilla in the last day of athletics competitions were Analyn Ricalde of Aurora Quezon Elementary School and Joy Regillas of Dr. Albert Elementary School, who also won five gold medals each.

Also turning in multiple gold-medal performances was Daryl Ceballos of Dr. Albert Elementary School. He ruled the 50m dash for 12-year-old and under, for his fourth gold after capturing the 100m, 200m and 400m in his category.

Twelve-year-old Regillas, also from DAES, likewise snatched her fifth gold medal yesterday, winning the 200m and leading her team to the 4x400 title. She won the baseball throw, 50m and 100m Thursday. *With a report from Alaine Lou Antonio*

Blu Boys bat for glory as RP hosts Asian softball



ANGPING

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE COUNTRY'S bid to recapture its lost glory in softball gets a new start as the Blu Boys and Girls fight for honors in the Asian championships from May 31 to June 7 at three Metro Manila venues.

"We will give the traditional powers in the region a good fight and try to regain our lofty place in Asian softball," said Manila Representative and Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines president Harry Angping during yesterday's launching at the Manila Pavilion.

Despite the SARS outbreak, Angping said 19 nations, including Hong Kong and China, will compete in the 7th men's and 8th women's championships.

"Attendance is confirmed. Fans are going to witness high-caliber matches with the lineup of teams," said Angping.

Also present during the launching were POC president Celso Dayrit, Softball Council of Asia Secretary General Low Beng Choo, baseball great Reynaldo Manzanares and Roberto Ituralde, mentors of the Blu Boys and Girls, respectively, and project director Salvador Salacup.

"We have a solid shot at the title," said Manzanares. The Blu Boys won the 1968, 1974 and 1990 Asian Championships, while the Blu Girls topped the 1972 event.

Other teams competing in the men's division are titlist Japan, Chinese-Taipei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, India and Iran.

China will defend its title in the women's side also composed of South Korea, Iran, Thailand, Indonesia, Chinese-Taipei and India.

The championship games will be held at the Rizal Memorial Stadium while Manila Polo Club and the Rosario Sports Complex in Pasig City will host the eliminations.

Price of pride

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

JOHN Lardner, a sportswriter attempting at poetry, wrote in defense of professional athletes:

"Right or wrong is all the same,
When baby needs new shoes.
It isn't how you play the game,
It's whether you win or lose."

Roger Kahn, one of the best sportswriters America has produced, said those lines "are remembered by five people." He did not identify them; neither did he state their gender nor station in life. But Kahn wrote: "The pros wanted poetry, marching bands, pompom girls." And yet, "Society conditioned us to believe in the beauties of amateurism."

Not anymore. Sports today is big time business. It is spelled m-o-n-e-y.

Whereas before when a pair of shoes was enough incentive for a player to aspire for a slot in the national quintet, sadly, that is not so anymore these days.

The color of money has become the chief consideration for the donning of national colors. Make that greenback. Almighty dollar.

I know of some who love to shun the national team like the SARS plague not for lack of interest but for lack of bucks colored green being thrust into their pockets. Some of them still roam the vicinity of the PBA backyard; one of them has the talent to become great. However, the possibility of greatness has been, is still being, impeded by his lust for dough more than "do it, bebe."

The fear of accident has become the overriding factor among athletes hesitant to join battles overseas. That fear, alas, can only be effectively killed with wads of bills. Too much worship of the good things in life is what gnaws away at an athlete's desire for excellence. Thus, Byron's right: "Ready money is Aladdin's lamp."

This one, coming from an athlete who struck a jackpot of a contract, tells it all: "After I got the million, I rolled over and went to sleep."

Some do it for pride, the rest money.

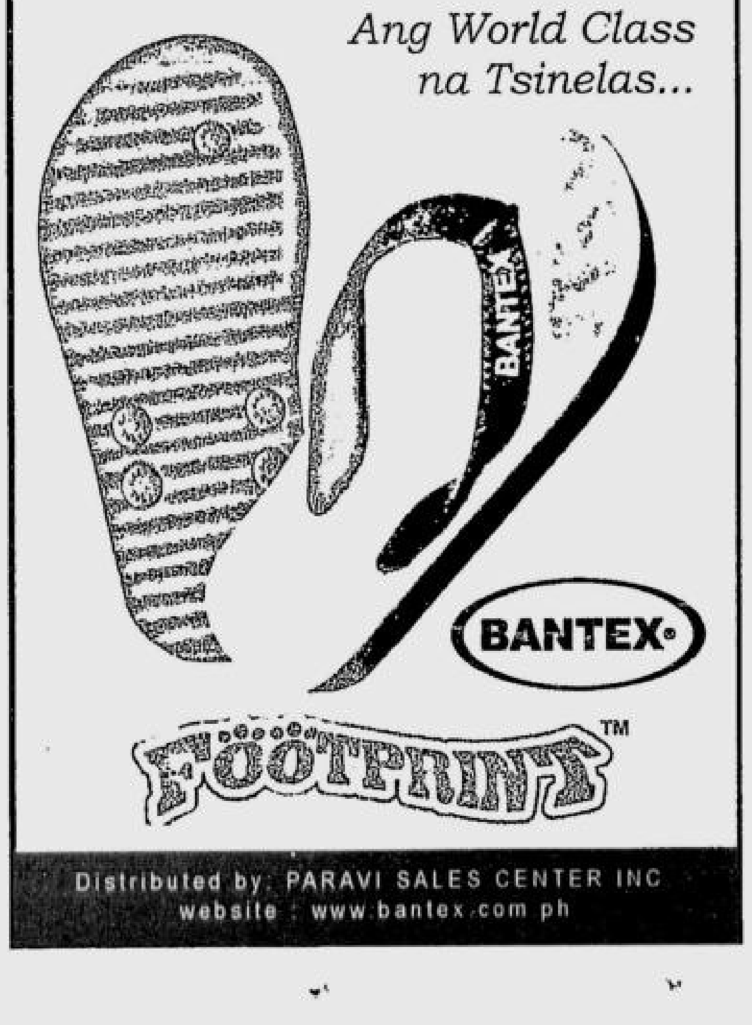
***

Joel Banal will start today as the head coach of Talk N' Text, replacing American John Woolpert. For Joel, TNT's erstwhile assistant coach, it will be a temporary job as he has a contract to fulfill as head coach of Ateneo in the UAAP season starting in July. Joel and the Blue Eagles have the tough job of repeating as UAAP champions this year after scoring their classic victory last year over arch-rival De La Salle. The rumor mill says Bill Bayno might take over when Joel starts to sit at the Ateneo from July to October for this year's UAAP season.

Different folks, different strokes.

New coach, new stroke.

Here's a glass to you, Joel.



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FUTURE TIGER

Tabuena tops Sarawak meet

By Jong Arcano

MIGUEL (right) with father Luigi

PDI PHOTO

AMID chants of "Tiger, Tiger, Tiger" from the foreign gallery circling the 18th green, eight-year-old Miguel Tabuena completed a stunning victory in the Sarawak Junior World Masters Golf Championship recently at the Damai Golf and Country Club in Kuching, Malaysia.

Tabuena neutralized the power of Malaysian defending champion Leonard Chin, who stood almost twice taller and bigger, with his well-rounded game as he knocked in three consecutive birdies in a final-round effort of four-over-par 62 to prevail in Class E with plenty to spare.

The winning margin was 14 strokes after Tabuena's previous rounds of 67 and 66. But what made Tabuena's first major conquest abroad very impressive was the way he outscored not just his Class E competitors but also those in Class D (9-10 years).

Tabuena had caused a stir from the start and by the time his mission was successfully over, everybody was already calling him a "future Tiger" in reference to the golf icon who failed to get his bid for a third Masters crown in Augusta going due to a storm.

Anthony See, the only other RP entry aside from Tabuena, claimed the runner-up trophy in Class D.

With Tabuena's sensational victory, the Philippines continued to firm up its status as a source of jungolf talents. Dottie Ardina is now considered as one of the world's best after winning the Junior World in San Diego and the US Kids in Virginia last year.

The Sarawak tourney drew about 200 jungolfers from 13 countries, a huge turnout despite the dreaded SARS epidemic and the war in Iraq. For the same reasons, the Asia-Pacific Junior Championships in Jakarta, Indonesia set late this month were cancelled.

"Miguel was really bent on going to Malaysia no matter what. It's probably the desire to compete despite the reasons for worry that drove him to play really well," said Miguel's father Luigi.

Gerry Handog, president of the Jungolf Foundation of the Philippines, said Tabuena's victory is, indeed, a shot in the arm for local jungolf.

"Miguel is living up to his promise as a future golf hero for the country. We share with his family and the whole country, the pride and joy of this shining achievement," said Handog.

Tabuena, who goes to the International School and plays out of Alabang and Sta. Elena, started to play golf at age two and was even featured in a television commercial for a milk product showcasing his golf talent at a very young age.

The tournament was organized by Ministry of Social Development and Urbanization, Ministry of Tourism, Sarawak Junior Golf Foundation, and the Malaysian Golf Association.

ERNIE Els of South Africa talks to the media outside the clubhouse at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia, where the first round of golf has been cancelled for the day. This is the first time since 1983 that a round of golf has been cancelled and the first time since 1939 that the opener was called off. AFP

Mother Nature cancels opener

AUGUSTA, Georgia—Golf legend Jack Nicklaus sloshed through mud outside the Augusta National clubhouse, seemingly oblivious to the biting breeze, the chilling drizzle, the total lack of anyone else on the putting green.

"Ah, what a beautiful day," he joked, pulling out three balls for some last-minute Masters practice.

Thursday was a day for staying inside after another wave of showers turned golf's hallowed grounds into a muddy mess, forcing the first round to be called off without a shot being struck.

They'll be back Friday (Saturday in Manila), Tiger Woods and the rest of the 93-man field, hoping to play a grueling 36 holes and get the first major of the year back on schedule.

Nicklaus arrived at the course in the morning, only to get word that no golf would be played. He went back home for a while, but couldn't stay away.

"I didn't have anything else to do," the six-time Masters champion said. "So I figured I would go do some putting and chipping."

Indeed, while Augusta National has been trying to stave off Martha Burk and her protests against the all-male membership, there was nothing the exclusive club could do about another woman: Mother Nature.

For the first time since 1939, the opening round was postponed by rain.

"I'd like to see something good happen here because of all the negative press," David Toms said. "But we don't play in a dome."

A dome would have come in handy this week. It's been raining since Sunday, knocking out one entire day of practice and cutting short the popular Par 3 Tournament.

Even so, some 30,000 fans showed up Thursday, ready to see some golf. They walked gingerly through the mud, but their shoes and pants were still splattered. *AP*

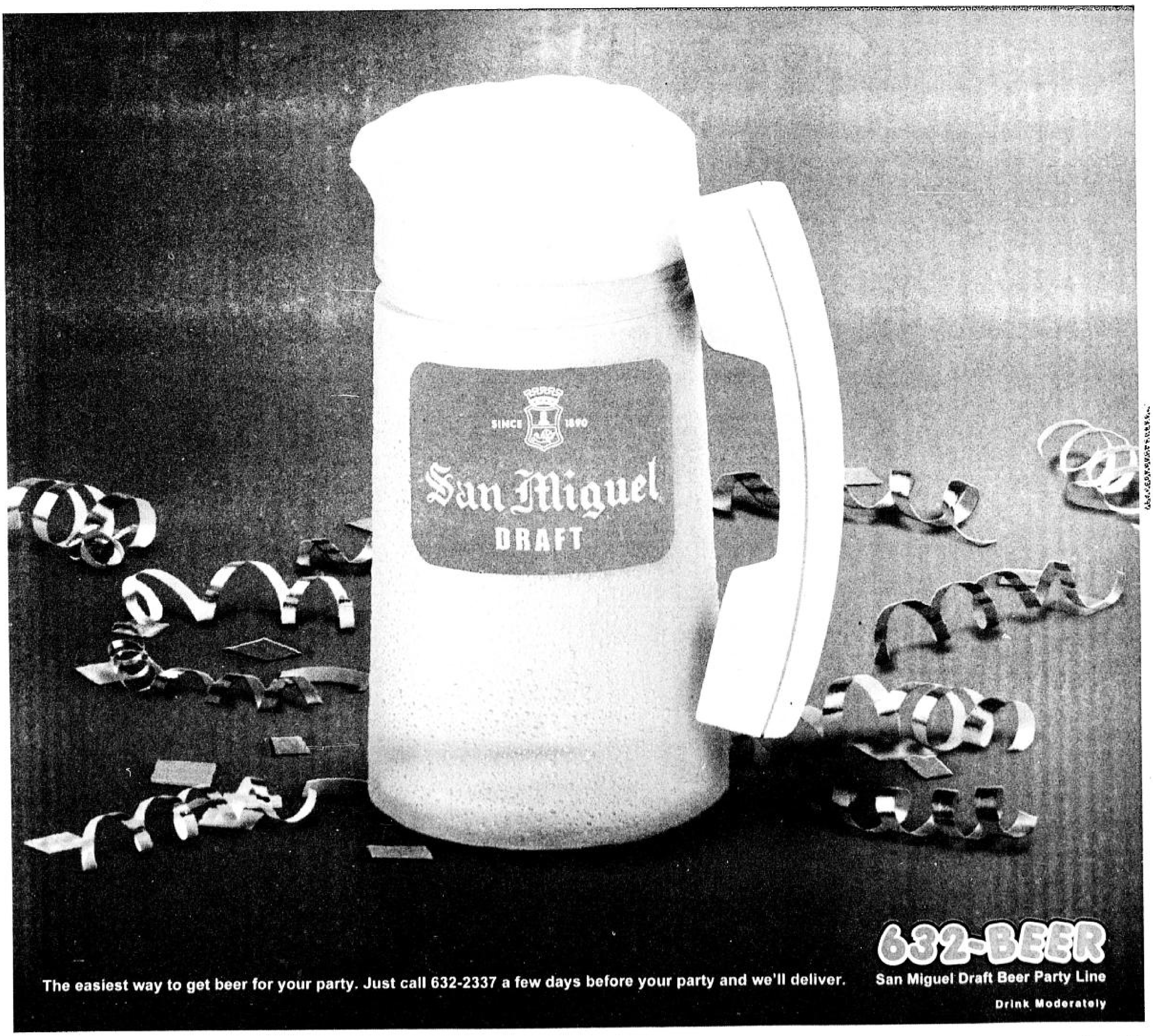
Leongson eyes back-to-back win in Guam

TO win the 2003 Guam Smokin' Wheel motocross championship for the second straight year will be Ernie Leongson's aim when he competes in the prestigious motocross event this weekend.

Leongson, a two-time national motocross titlist, will try to become the first-ever back-to-back winner in the centerpiece pro open category in the event being held under the auspices of the Federation Internationale de Motorcycliste (FIM).

The multi-awarded campaigner from Taytay, Rizal, who is being supported by Shell Advance and Norkis-Yamaha, will pit riding skills against the equally-talented riders from Guam, Saipan, Japan and several other Southeast Asian countries.

Leongson will be accompanied by National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa) secretary-general Macky Carapiet during the two-day competition organized by the Guam Motocross Federation.



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SBC Red Cubs clinch crown as Arao shines

By Roy Luarca

CLAIFORD Arao stood out as the San Beda Red Cubs added the Sunkist Youth Basketball Championship to their collection of crowns yesterday.

The 6-foot-5 Arao wound up with 23 points and 13 rebounds to power the Red Cubs past the UP Integrated School Preps, 61-56, in the thrilling final at the Makati Coliseum.

With Arao virtually unstoppable inside, NCAA champion San Beda controlled the boards, 26-15, and proved more cohesive than its UAAP counterpart with more assists (19-16) and steals (10-6).

Just 18 years old, the Ateneo-bound Arao earned MVP honors. He was joined in the mythical five by teammates Roel Escueta, a member of the 2002 RP Youth, and Joseph Casio and UPIS standouts Marvin Cruz and Jacob Manlapaz.

Their eighth straight title this year under Coach Ato Badolato was worth P75,000 for the Fila-outfitted Red Cubs, also the reigning national inter-secondary champions.

Faith Academy clawed back from a 41-36 halftime deficit to subdue San Sebastian College, 73-69, and clinch third place.

"It was a good fight and we're really proud of the boys. They played with the hearts of champions," said co-team managers Dilip Budhrani and Rajan Gidwani.

Legaspi hosts Streetball elims today

THE ADIDAS Streetball Challenge 2003 goes south today for the Bicol region eliminations at the Divine Word College in Legaspi City, according to Angelica Suiza, marketing director of adidas Philippines.

The event is co-presented by Globe Gentext and WG&A in cooperation with adidas fragrance and body care for men, Powerade, Viva mineral water, Cafe Lupe, Milo, Ford Motors, Purefoods Corned Beef, Pink magazine, Chalk magazine, Studio 23, Magic 89.9 dwTM and 99.5 RT.

Sunkist
2003 Youth Basketball Championship
YBC

Congratulations to the 2003 YBC Winners!

Gold: San Beda College
Silver: UP Integrated School
Bronze: Faith Academy

Final Scores

Team	Score		Team	Score
San Beda College	61	vs	UP Integrated School	56
Faith Academy	73	vs	San Sebastian College	69

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Hosted by the City of Makati.
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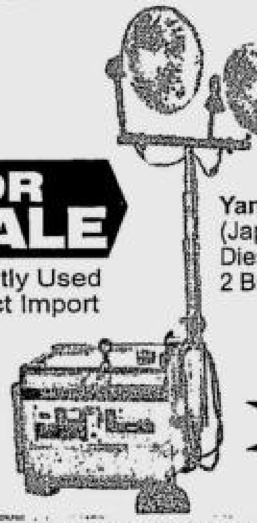

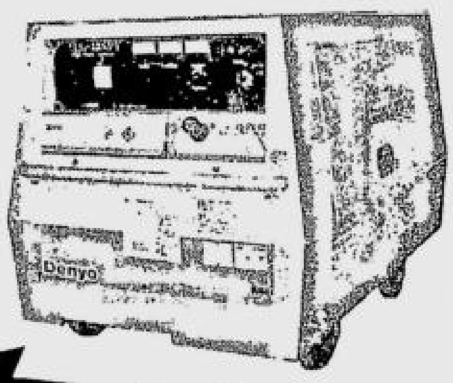

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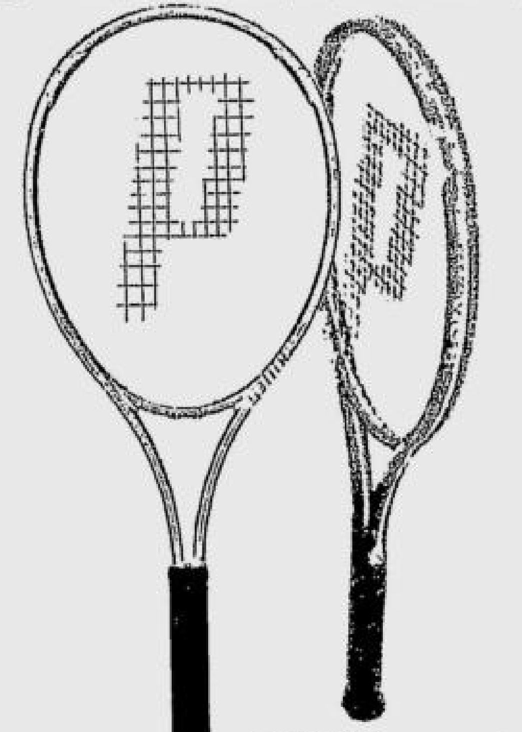

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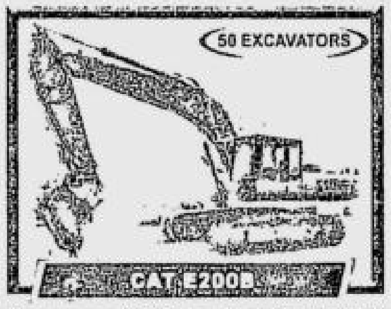

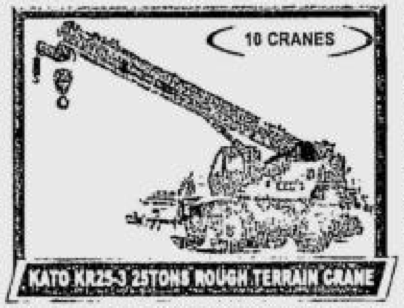
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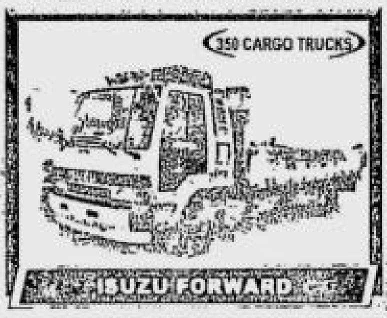

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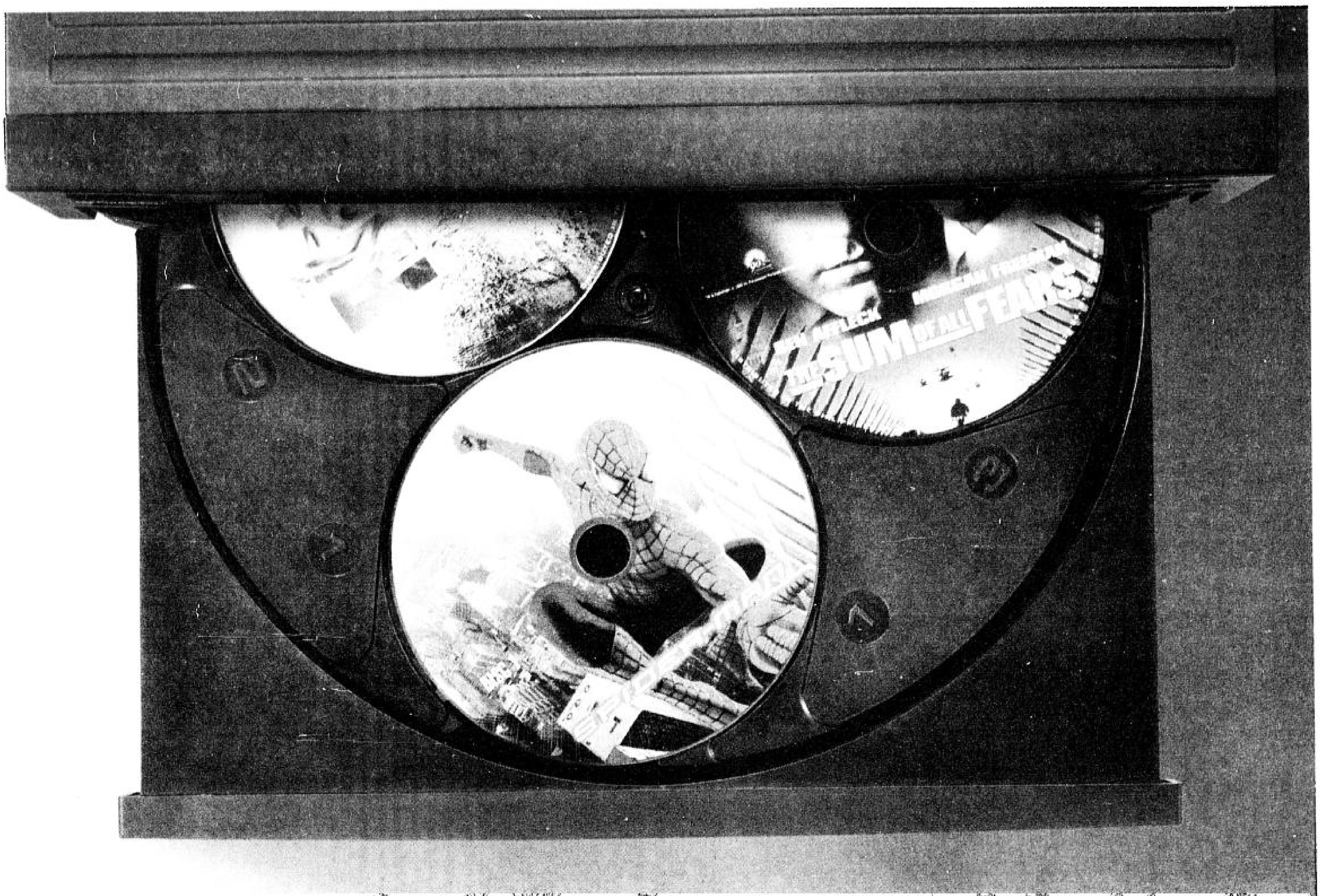
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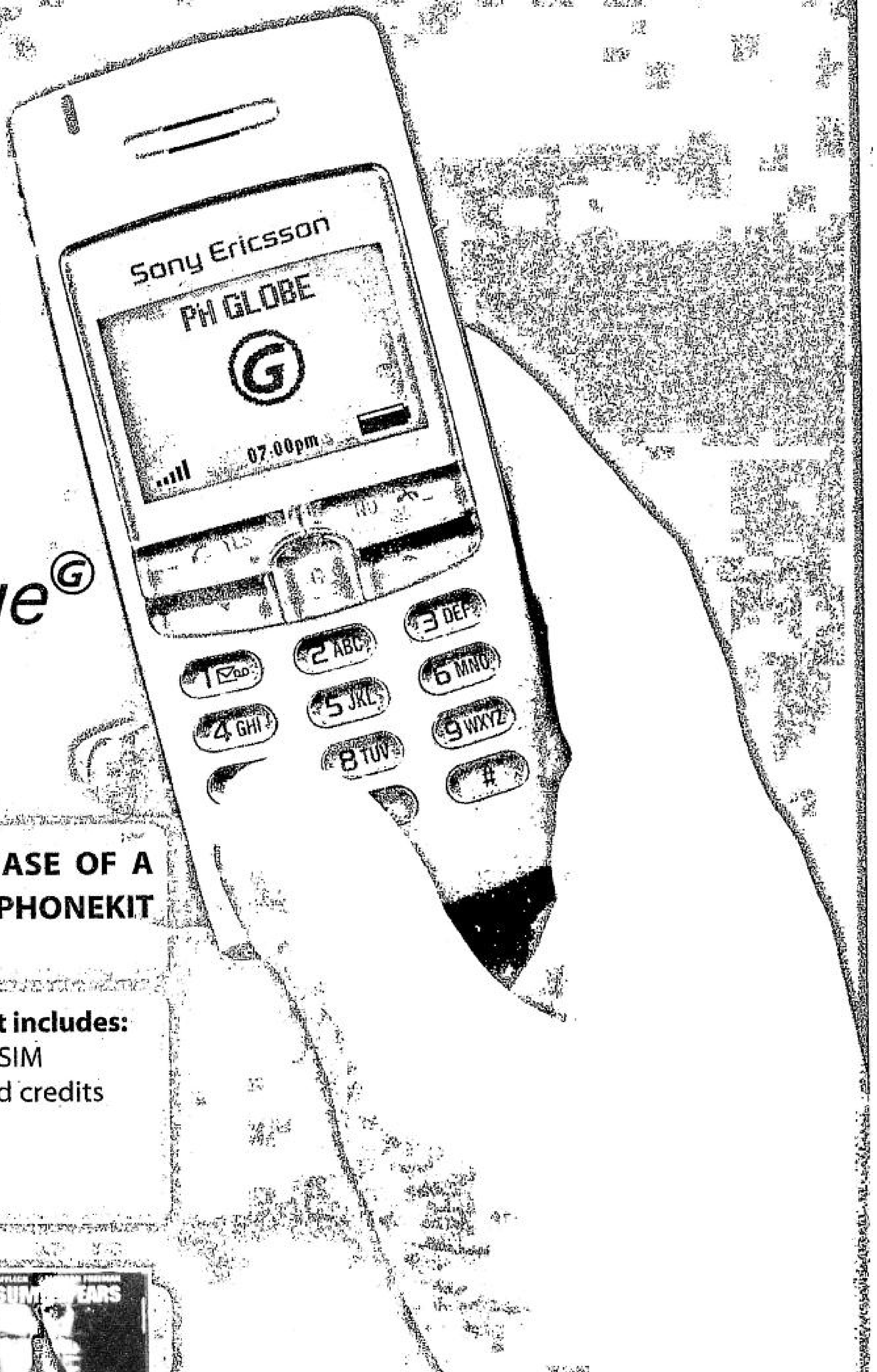
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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

BALADJAY claims she has a lump in the neck.

Baladjay wants to do an Erap /A26

Mindoro solon's chief of staff slain /A26

'Wow Mali!' prank not funny at all for injured schoolteacher /A26

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‘Wow Mali!’ prank not funny at all for injured teacher

By Alcuin Papa

THE JOKE now appears to be on the producers of the gag show "Wow Mali" when the prank they pulled on schoolteacher Josephine Basit backfired, resulting in serious physical injuries.

Basit, a mother of two and a teacher at the San Antonio Elementary School on Roosevelt Avenue in Quezon City, on Thursday twisted her ankle and ended up in a cast after the producers of the gag show, which is aired on ABC-5, set her up to film her reaction to a scary situation.

Basit yesterday said in an interview that she and her family are studying the possibility of filing charges against the producers.

ABC-5 vice president for corporate affairs Terra Daffon yesterday told the INQUIRER they have reached an agreement with Basit and her husband.

"We have made an amicable settlement," Daffon said. "For all the trouble and loss of income, we will compensate her for the two weeks that she won't be able to go to work."

Daffon said that in the four years "Wow Mali" has been airing on TV, this was only the fourth time that a problem with a subject has cropped up.

"('Wow Mali!') is a gag show," Daffon said. "One untoward incident a year is not bad at all. We make it a point to iron out any problem we have with any subject who complains about the show."

Basit, a regular customer of Bloom Hair Salon on Roosevelt Avenue, decided to have a haircut there on Thursday afternoon. One of the salon's attendants led her to the second floor where she was told she would get a free massage.

"It was empty and quiet inside," Basit said. "Immediately, I sensed there was something going on."

The attendant told her to lie down. She was also told she had to be blindfolded. She then heard a voice say, "*Simulan na natin ang dasal* (Let us start the prayer now)."

Surprised, she took off the blindfold and saw five people in black masks. Terrified, she ran to the stairs but she tripped and tumbled down the stairs, spraining her left ankle.

The production people of the show took her to the JP Sioson General Hospital where doctors treated her injury and put her leg in a cast. They then took Basit to her husband at the administrative department of Camp Karingal.

When the INQUIRER talked to Basit yesterday, her left ankle was still in a cast. She said she has to use crutches and to take a two-week leave from work.

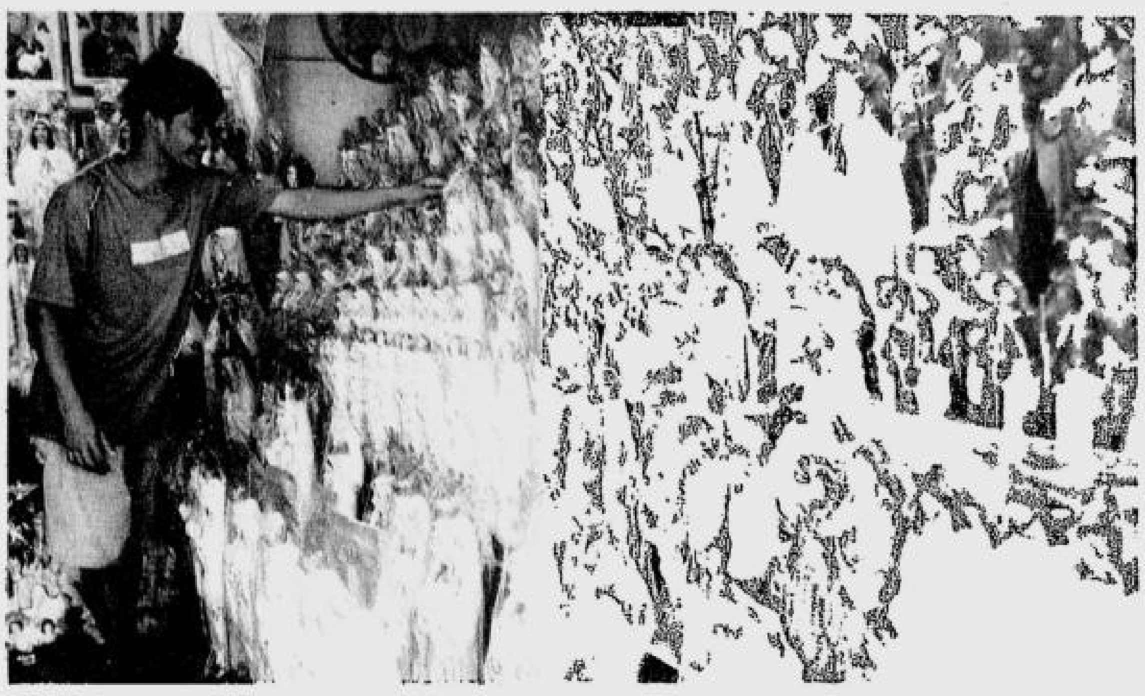
"The doctor said it was a severe sprain and that there were torn ligaments," she said. "Last night, I couldn't sleep well. I keep seeing their masked faces whenever I close my eyes.

"They told me it was not their intention to hurt me," she added, referring to the show's producers. "But I argued that they planned to scare me and film my reaction for their show. And I scare very easily.

"They also told me that this was the first time anyone was hurt because of what they do. But I don't believe them. What they did to me was terrible."

Basit called for the cancellation of the show.

"They shouldn't make jokes at the expense of someone else," she said.



SAINTLY SEASON
Vendors of religious images, such as this man in his shop in Tayuman, Sta. Cruz, Manila, expect sales to pick up during Lent, even as many people are making elaborate plans not to pray but to spend the season out of town.

ERIK ARAZAS

Baladjay wants to do an Erap

By Leila B. Salaverria

PYRAMID scam suspect Rosario "Rose" Baladjay wants to do an Erap.

Like the former President, Baladjay, who has been detained at the Makati City jail after the Senate turned her over to police last March, is seeking confinement in a hospital for her alleged medical complaints—a lump in her neck and an increase in her heartbeat.

In a hearing yesterday before Judge Salvador Abad-Santos of Branch 143 of the Makati Regional Trial Court, Baladjay's lawyers asked the court to allow her hospitalization for a series of tests and treatments for her symptoms.

Baladjay was present in the hearing. She arrived in court at 9 a.m. yesterday wearing a white jacket and brown pants, but without her usual heavy makeup.

Some of the complainants in her case were also present.

Pulmonary specialist Dr. Jose Lopez David, who examined Baladjay on April 1, had recommended her transfer to a hospital for tests. He said a biopsy was needed to determine if the circular mass in her neck is a cancerous growth.

He also noted that when he examined Baladjay, her pulse rate was 97 beats per minute. David said this could be due to stress, hormonal imbalance, anxiety, depression, pollution or her environment. But her blood pressure was normal at 120/70, he added.

Bureau of Jail Management and Penology medical officer Dr. Eden Cahilig said that when she examined Baladjay, the suspect had a rapid heart rate of 106 beats per minute. Cahilig also confirmed that there is a lump in Baladjay's neck.

The prosecution argued that the tests on Baladjay could be done inside the Makati City Jail.

But David said the Makati city jail is "too dirty" and that no doctor would dare conduct a blood test there.

Judge Abad Santos said Baladjay could be brought to the warden's office for the tests. But David said special equipment is needed for the tests.

The complainants' lawyers said a government doctor should examine Baladjay for another opinion.

They also noted that the complainants are also suffering from the same symptoms—anxiety and shortness of breath—during the case hearings, alluding to the possible cause of Baladjay's increased heartbeat.

But the judge gave no order after the hour-long hearing.

Baladjay's lawyer Hilda Clave, however, said in an interview that she would file a motion urging the judge to rule on the matter before the judge goes on leave for health reasons and his workload.

Clave said there is no need for a government doctor to examine Baladjay because the BJMP medical officer is a government doctor.

Baladjay was arrested last March 11 for allegedly defrauding hundreds of people who had invested millions of pesos in her Multitel Investment company.

Mindoro solon's chief of staff slain

By Alcuin Papa

A NEPHEW of Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato, who was also her chief of staff, was robbed and killed in Quezon City on his way to work yesterday morning.

Marvin Jay Ramirez, 31, of Remax Subdivision, Mapayapa Village 3, Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, was on his way to work at the House of Representative when four still unidentified suspects waylaid him at about 7:45 a.m.

According to the investigation of PO2 Edwin de la Cruz of the Central Police District Criminal Investigation Unit, Ramirez had just alighted from a tricycle near the BPI Family Bank branch at the corner of Holy Spirit Drive and De Leon Street in Barangay Holy Spirit, also in Quezon City, when he was attacked.

One of the four suspects fired a single shot at the head of Ramirez, police said. Another suspect stabbed him in the right side of the body.

When Ramirez fell to the ground, his attackers took his cell phone, wallet and knapsack, according to the investigator.

The suspects then commandeered a tricycle and escaped, the investigator said.

De la Cruz said the most probable motive for the killing was robbery.

But he added that police have not ruled out other motives as the investigation continues.

Centennial

THE D.D. Alejandro Memorial United Methodist Church in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, is celebrating its centennial anniversary today starting at 9 a.m.

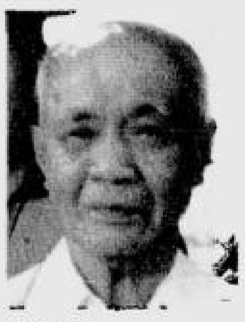
All workers and friends are cordially invited to the celebration which has the theme "Pananampalatayang Panghabang Panahon, Lumalago, Sumusulong."

80-year-old man missing

PRUDENCIO V. Dalao Sr. 80, has been missing from his Las Piñas home since April 6 when he left to visit his sister in Mandaluyong and his brother in Antipolo City.

He has a prominent bandaged wound on the right side of the head.

If you know where he is, please inform Veronica B. Dalao of 27 Ilang Ilang St., San Antonio Valley 17, Talon IV, Las Piñas City, or call her at 800-6897 or 803-4669; or Vilma D. Vallar at 523-4409 or 524-1241 local 211.



DALAO

Class '53 marks 50 years

CLASS '53 of Morong High School (now known as the University of Rizal System) celebrates its 50th anniversary on April 20, 2003.

Ms Fely Sanga-Mesa, class president invites all class members to participate in the event.

The launch of the "We Are Family" crusade will highlight the celebration.

Members may contact Ms Mesa, 652-0051; Fe Aquino, 655-1029; Dianita Gonzales, 644-0771; Abreng Dikit, 674-5199; or Tess Villaflor, 674-2058.

Fake-money machine planted, says Yap brod

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE BROTHER of jailed former Mayor Rey Yap yesterday accused police of planting the counterfeiting machine and cache of firearms that police claimed they had seized in the family compound in Sapang Dalaga, Misamis Occidental during a raid last April 3.

Yap used to be mayor of Sapang Dalaga.

Yap's younger brother Reyno claimed the counterfeiting machine was in fact a wood slicing equipment which was made to look like a machine for manufacturing fake bills.

"We can only suspect who's behind all this," Reyno said in a phone interview.

"Clearly, this is nothing but pure harassment," he added.

He accused the head of the National Capital Region Police Office, Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, of being over eager in pinning down his family.

"Why is he so interested in us," Reyno asked. "He's in charge only of Metro Manila but he ordered his men to conduct the raid in Sapang Dalaga. If he wants to become PNP chief, he shouldn't do it at our expense."

Velasco had also ordered the raid of Yap's cell at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa last Feb. 5.

Police and prison guards reportedly found about P300,000 in counterfeit bills and communication equipment in Yap's cell.

Last March 23, Velasco's men raided the Yap home in Sapang Dalaga but found no prohibited items, according to Reyno.

He said police returned on April 3 and planted two hand grenades, two M-14 rifles, a Garand rifle, a Thompson assault rifle, a .22 revolver, a pair of Trio ICOM based-radios, bandoliers, black bonnets, and assorted ammunition.

The team supposedly also found several pieces of fake P1,000, P500, P100 and P50 bills, and a printing machine used for manufacturing the bogus notes.

The raid started at about 7 p.m. and lasted until 4 a.m. the following day, according to Reyno.

"Throughout the raid, no one was allowed to enter our house because they were planting evidence there."

I miss the martial law days

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PRESIDENT Macapagal- Arroyo's popularity ratings have gone down considerably—negative 14—because of her decision to have the country part of the so-called "coalition of the willing."

The President should take consolation in the fact that great leaders in history made unpopular decisions that turned out to be wise on hindsight.

Her decision to have the country counted as one of the "hawks" in the Iraq controversy has turned out to be the right one.

* * *

I hate to say this but history is written by the victors and not by the vanquished. Had Iraq won the war, things would have been different. Saddam Hussein would have been hailed a hero.

But Iraq has fallen and Saddam Hussein's unbelievable cruelty toward his subjects exposed.

GMA's decision has been vindicated.

* * *

The mark of a great leader is being able to take the consequences of his or her decision.

GMA knew most of her countrymen were opposed to the Iraq war; but she nevertheless went on to have the country support the US-British coalition.

On that score, GMA has the makings of a great leader.

* * *

There's a saying, it's a lonely place at the top. A leader who doesn't know that has no business being at the top. The No. 1 trait of a great leader is making difficult and unpopular decisions that he thinks will, in the long run, benefit his countrymen.

* * *

Prisons Director Ricardo Macala has reportedly ordered "surprise inspections" of the cell of ex-Mayor Rey Yap of Sapang Dalaga, Misamis Occidental.

According to the Philippine National Police, Yap had managed by remote control a syndicate printing counterfeit money in his town and distributing it in Metro Manila.

Yap and his brother Roy are serving a life sentence for the murder of mayoral candidate Victorio Cebedo in 1992.

* * *

Macala's order to have Yap's cell subjected to surprise inspections was just a put-on. He would not have made that order had the police not exposed Yap's hand in the printing of bogus bills in his hometown. Yap was able to run his syndicate using his cellular phone.

Macala allows inmates at the National Bilibid Prisons' maximum security compound to have cellular phones in their cells. In fact, he sold them those cell phones.

* * *

This column has exposed Macala's illegal practice selling cell phones to rich inmates. But it seems that my exposé become a voice in the wilderness.

To the people who should have acted on my exposé on Macala: Are you guys deaf? Or were you bribed?

* * *

It seems everybody in this and previous administrations has become callous or deaf to irregularities exposed in media.

This is not a brief for the Marcos dictatorship but I miss those times because irregularities this columnist exposed were immediately acted upon. Government officials concerned investigated the allegations made in media even if there was, supposedly, suppression of press freedom.

Not only were investigations made of the exposés, action was taken. Corrupt government officials and employees who were exposed were dismissed after reports about them were found to be true.

* * *

I really miss the martial law days insofar as swift action by the martial law government on exposés in media was concerned.

(However, I hasten to add that media could not expose the irregularities committed by Marcos and Imelda and their close relatives).

I remember I exposed the massive corruption and inefficiency of the members of Station 5 of the Western Police District (WPD).

* * *

A week after my exposé was published in my column, "Police News Roundup," in the Manila Bulletin, Mr. Marcos personally ordered the relief of the entire complement of Station 5, from the lowest-ranking patrolman to its station commander.

Does democracy mean being deaf or callous to the people's cry for help?

Call Marcos names. But he certainly was sensitive to the people's pulse until he became gravely ill and was no longer in control of the government.

Batch '78 looks backs

BATCH 1978 of Batangas West High School in Lemery, Batangas will hold its "Balik Tanaw" grand alumni homecoming at the school quadrangle on April 19.

The activity starts at noon.

For inquiries, call batch chairperson Dr. Evelita Magno-Macababbad, DPPS, of Little Angels Medical Hospital in Lemery, at (043) 2142539 or (043) 411-1282.

BAY WATCH
US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone gets a guided tour of the newly redeveloped Roxas Boulevard promenade from its developer, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, accompanied by his wife Evelina "Beng" Atienza.

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2 SEX DRIVE	2 THE CORE	2 KANGAROO JACK 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 NATIONAL SECURITY 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:20	2 KANGAROO JACK
3 KANGAROO JACK	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 JUST MARRIED 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30		GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE WILD THORNBERRYS 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:20	3 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
4 NATIONAL SECURITY	4 SOLARIS		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE CORE 1:10, 3:45, 6:20, 8:55, 11:30	4 SOLARIS
	5 THE WILD THORNBERRYS		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 KANGAROO JACK 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:20	5 THE RECRUIT
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7 WILLARD
8 HAPPY HOUR

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1 NATIONAL SECURITY
2 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
3 KANGAROO JACK
4 DREAMCATCHER
5 THE CORE
6 WILLARD
7 GANGS OF NEW YORK
8 SOLARIS
9 SEX DRIVE
10 THE RECRUIT

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
2 WILLARD
3 TEARS OF THE SUN
4 THE RECRUIT
5 NATIONAL SECURITY
6 SEX DRIVE
7 THE CORE
8 KANGAROO JACK
9 GANGS OF NEW YORK
10 VIRGIN PEOPLE 3
11 JUST MARRIED
12 HAPPY HOUR

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
2 THE CORE
3 NATIONAL SECURITY
4 KANGAROO JACK
5 SOLARIS
6 THE RECRUIT
7 WILLARD
8 DREAMCATCHER
9 SEX DRIVE
10 HAPPY HOUR
11 GANGS OF NEW YORK
12 JUST MARRIED

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1 TEARS OF THE SUN
2 THE RECRUIT
3 SOLARIS
4 NATIONAL SECURITY
5 KANGAROO JACK
6 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
7 WILLARD
8 JUST MARRIED
9 SEX DRIVE
10 THE CORE
11 GANGS OF NEW YORK
12 HAPPY HOUR

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 THE RECRUIT
2 THE CORE
3 SEX DRIVE
4 WILLARD
5 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
6 SOLARIS
7 KANGAROO JACK
8 NATIONAL SECURITY

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
2 THE RECRUIT
3 HAPPY HOUR
4 KANGAROO JACK
5 JUST MARRIED
6 WILLARD
7 SEX DRIVE
8 THE CORE
9 SOLARIS
10 NATIONAL SECURITY

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 TEARS OF THE SUN
2 THE CORE
3 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
4 JUST MARRIED
5 RING 2 (JAPANESE)
6 AMAZON
7 SEX DRIVE
8 THE RECRUIT

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 GANGS OF NEW YORK
2 CLOSED
3 THE CORE
4 EXTREMISTS
5 DREAMCATCHER
6 THE RECRUIT
7 CLOSED
8 SEX DRIVE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 THE CORE
2 SEX & ZEN 2
3 JUST MARRIED
4 THE RECRUIT
5 ABANDON
6 SEX DRIVE

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 SEX DRIVE
2 KANGAROO JACK
3 NATIONAL SECURITY
4 THE CORE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 THE CORE
2 SEX DRIVE
3 NATIONAL SECURITY
4 KANGAROO JACK

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1 DREAMCATCHER
2 EXTREMISTS
3 TEARS OF THE SUN
4 THE CORE
5 THE WILD THORNBERRYS
6 THE RECRUIT

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1 NATIONAL SECURITY
2 SEX DRIVE
3 KANGAROO JACK
4 THE CORE

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
850-2884

1 TEARS OF THE SUN
2 JUST MARRIED
3 GANGS OF NEW YORK
4 THE CORE

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-0976

1 SOLARIS
10:40 FS/11:10 MF/1:20/3:30/5:40/7:50/
9:30 LFS/10:00 LMF/11:40 END

2 THE WILD THORNBERRYS MOVIE
10:10 FS/10:30 MF/12:25/2:20/4:15/6:10/8:05
9:35 LFS/10:00 LMF/11:25 END

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THX THE CORE 11MF, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00, 12:15 MF
2 KANGAROO JACK
3 JUST MARRIED
4 THE RECRUIT
5 NATIONAL SECURITY
6 SOLARIS
7 DREAM CATCHER
8 SEX DRIVE
9 WILLARD
10 WILD THORNBERRY

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1 THE CORE
2 THE RECRUIT
3 SOLARIES
4 KANGAROO JACK
5 SEX DRIVE
6 WILD THORNBERRY
7 NATIONAL SECURITY

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1 WILD THORNBERRY
2 SOLARIES
3 THE CORE
4 NATIONAL SECURITY
5 THE RECRUIT
6 WILLARD
7 KANGAROO JACK
8 SEX DRIVE

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1 THE CORE
2 WILLARD
3 THE RECRUIT
4 KANGAROO JACK
5 DREAM CATCHER
6 WILD THORNBERRY
7 JUST MARRIED
8 SEX DRIVE

Malabon Citisquare 288-0985 / 288-2575

1 NATIONAL SECURITY
2 KANGAROO JACK
3 SEX DRIVE
4 PALABAN

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927 / 961- 5318 / 5270

1 ABANDONED
2 SEX DRIVE
3 JUST MARRIED
4 JAIL BIRDS
5 SEX & ZEN
6 THE CORE

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1 THE CORE
2 NATIONAL SECURITY
3 WILD THORBERRY
4 KANGAROO JACK
5 SEX DRIVE
6 WILLARD

Sta. Rosa Laguna 049-8370907

1 KANGAROO JACK
2 THE CORE
3 PALABAN
4 SEX DRIVE
5 JAIL BIRD

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1 FINAL DESTINATION
2 DREAM CATCHER
3 THE RECRUIT
4 THE CORE
5 THE EYE
6 ASTERIX & OBELIX

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1 THE CORE
2 DREAM CATCHER
3 THE RECRUIT
4 EXTRIMIST
5 GANGS OF NEW YORK
6 SEX DRIVE

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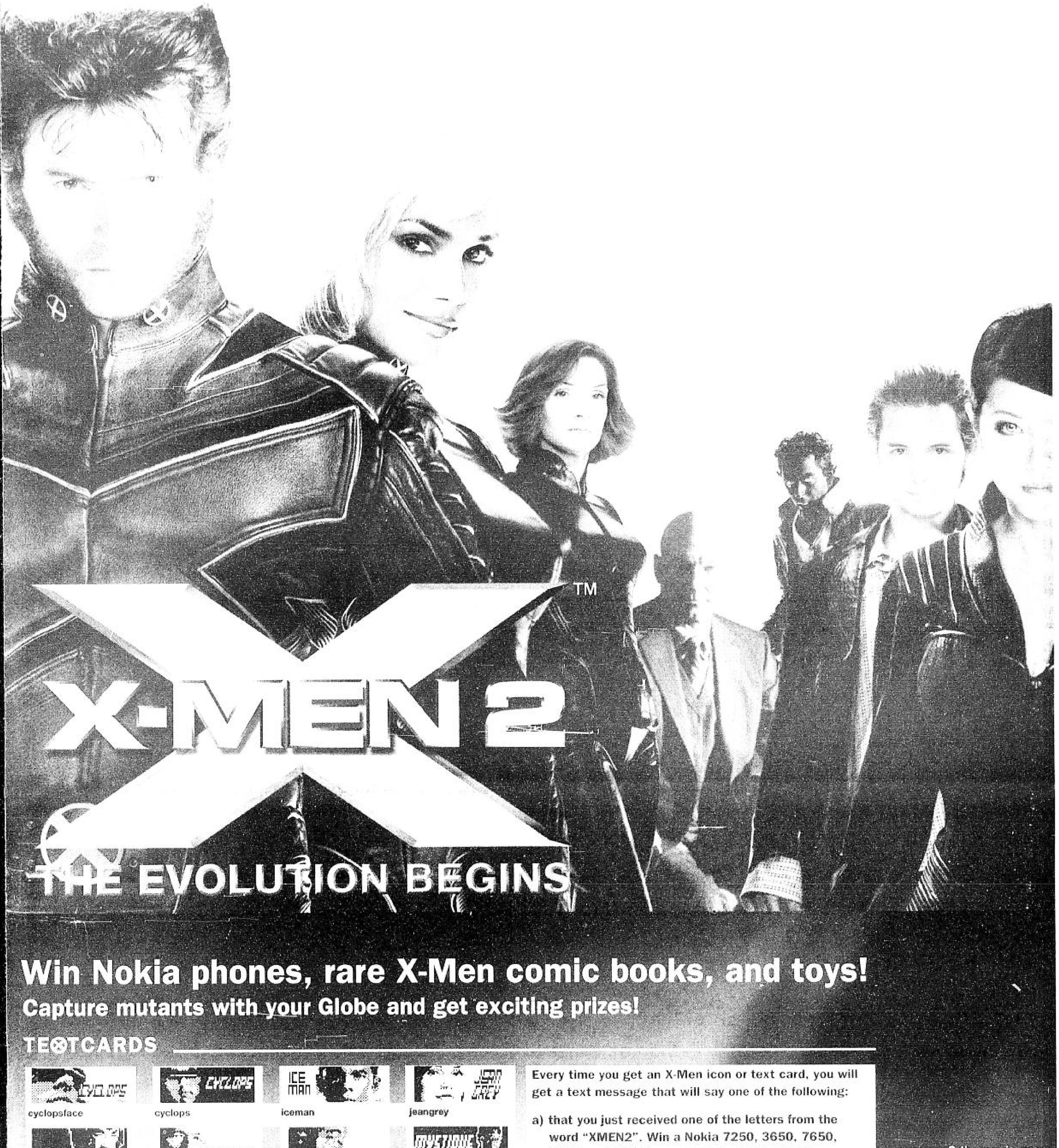
the hunt is on!
G
myGlobe
marvelmania
COLORED WALLPAPER
wolverine
storm
rogue
mystiquename
cyclops
iceman
jeangrey
nightcrawler
professorx
deathstrike
ICONS
cyclops
dstrike
iceman
jeangrey
jeanname
magneto
magnetoname
mystique
mystiquename
ncrawlername
nightcrawler
profx
pyro
rogue
storm
stryker
wolverine
wolvieglare
wolviename
x2title



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ICE MAN
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MAGNETO
MYSTIQUE
MYSTIQUE
NIGHT-CRAWLER
PYRO
rogue
ROGUE
STORM
STRYKER

cyclopsface	cyclops	iceman	jeangrey
magnetomask	magneto	mystiqeyes	mystique
mystiquename	ncrawlername	nightcrawler	professorx
pyrofire	pyro	roguelook	rogue
storm	stryker	wolverine	x2logo

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b) that you just won an X-Men collectible! Go to the myGlobe X2 Exhibit at Ayala Cinemas and choose the X-Men toy or comic book you want!

X-Men colored wallpapers are not included in the promo.

www.xmen2-themovie.com

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[illegible]:
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[illegible]olored wallpaper: go to myGlobe [illegible]WAP site. Under What's New, click on X-Men Wallpaper.

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AYALA CINEMAS

[illegible] to see all the prizes up for grabs?

[illegible]ts at Ayala Cinemas. ([illegible] 3, [illegible] Town Center). Over 500 uniq[illegible] on [illegible] toys, and graphic novels. Exhibits o[illegible], 2003. [illegible]ing on that date.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1534, Series of 2003

Parañaque judge faces administrative raps over land auction

By Christian Esguerra

THE PUBLIC Estates Authority is going after the Parañaque judge who had junked their court petition and paved the way for the auction of the 287-hectare PEA property last Monday.

The Office of the Solicitor General is poised to file administrative charges against Judge Aida Estrelito Macapagal for an alleged oversight in her ruling, accordig to PEA General Manager Teodorico Taguinod.

As of Thursday, three days after the auction, PEA officials had not yet received a copy of the decision that supposedly denied their request for a temporary restraining order, Taguinod said.

Mayor Joey Marquez held the auction to pressure PEA to pay its real property tax of P267 million that has accumulated since 2000.

Taguinod maintained that the pieces of property were exempt from realty taxes because they were reclaimed lands. "Besides, (they) are devoted (to) public use and public service," he said. "Thus, the imposition of real property taxes thereon is highly questionable."

SECOND WEEK!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED: Some scenes may be inappropriate for children under age 13
"Genuinely exciting! Watching Al Pacino is always a treat, and Collin Farrell matches him move for move." Leonard Maltin, HOT TICKET
"Pacino is flawless in what's certainly the year's first great film. Colin Farrell is the industry's next superstar." Sam Hallenbeck, NBC-TV FLORIDA
AL PACINO COLIN FARRELL
THE RECRUIT
IN THE C.I.A. NOTHING IS WHAT IT SEEMS.
the-recruit.com
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No: 8981440-41

SOLARIS R13 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	NATIONAL SECURITY P13 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10	WILD THORNBERRYS GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40
KANGAROO JACK GP 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:00	THE CORE P13 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:50	THE RECRUIT P13 12:40, 3:05, 5:30, 7:55, 10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 THE RECRUIT 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:55 P13
CINEMA 2 NATIONAL SECURITY 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50 P13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
MUSIC MUSEUM APR 29.2003 "THIS is ME I..." (Ana Llanes) 8:30PM
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JOHN GOODMAN • HALEY JOEL OSMENT
SNEAK PREVIEWS ON APRIL 14 AND 15!
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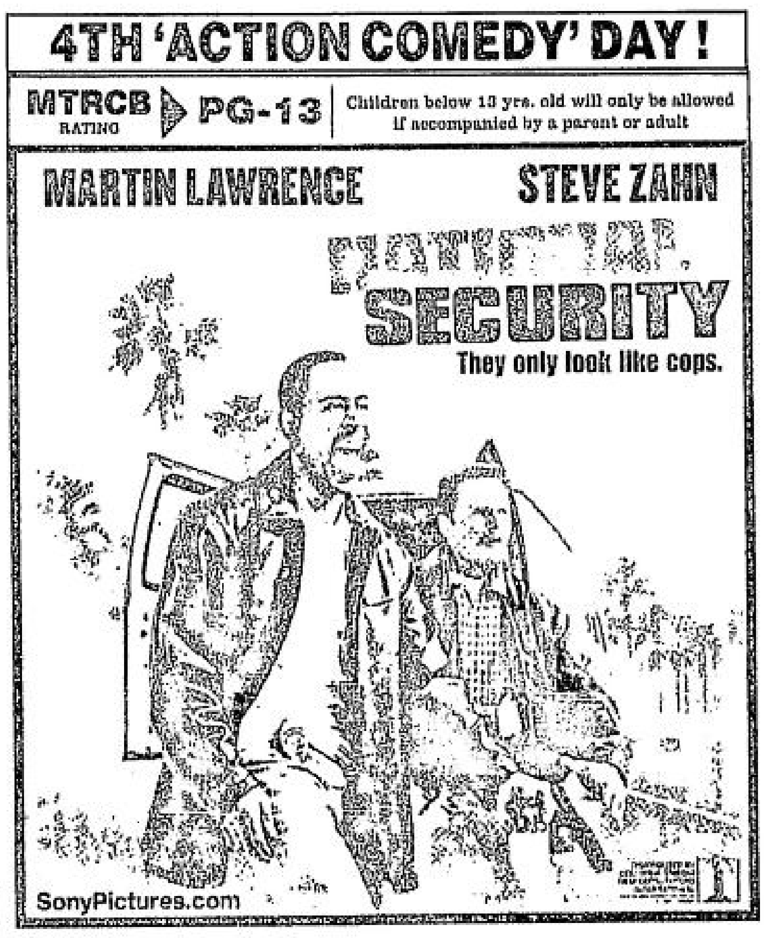
disney.com/junglebook2
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures


4TH 'ACTION COMEDY' DAY!
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MARTIN LAWRENCE STEVE ZAHN
NATIONAL SECURITY
They only look like cops.
SonyPictures.com

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	SEX DRIVE
Ali 2	TEARS OF THE SUN
Ali 3	NATIONAL SECURITY
Ali 4	THE CORE
Ali 5	KANGAROO JACK
Ali 6	SOLARIS
Ali 7	THE RECRUIT

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS

Farmers 1	SEX DRIVE
Farmers 2	WILLARD

ARANETA COLISEUM

APR 4 - 13	CHINA CIRCUS IS POSTPONED. Pls watch for future announcement

ELEPHANT WORLD

APR 12	SHOW - 5 PM / RIDE - 6 PM
APR 13	SHOW - 5 PM / RIDE - 6 PM
APR 14	FUN RIDES - 6 PM

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Per DTI NCR Permit No. 0551 Series of 2003
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APRIL 21-25 / 5 sessions
BASIC SCRIPTWRITING
lecturer: BING LAO
APRIL 28-30 / 3 sessions
BASIC PHOTOGRAPHY
lecturer: IBARRA DERI
May 1-2 / 2 sessions
DARKROOM TECHNIQUES
lecturer: IBARRA DERI
APRIL 28-May 2 / 5 sessions
SPECIAL MAKE-UP & PROSTHETICS
lecturer: CECILLE BAUN
May 5-16 / 10 sessions
BASIC CINEMATOGRAPHY
lecturers: ERIC DELA CRUZ/DINDO MARTINEZ
May 26-Jun 6 / 10 sessions
ADVANCED CINEMATOGRAPHY
lecturer: NEIL DAZA

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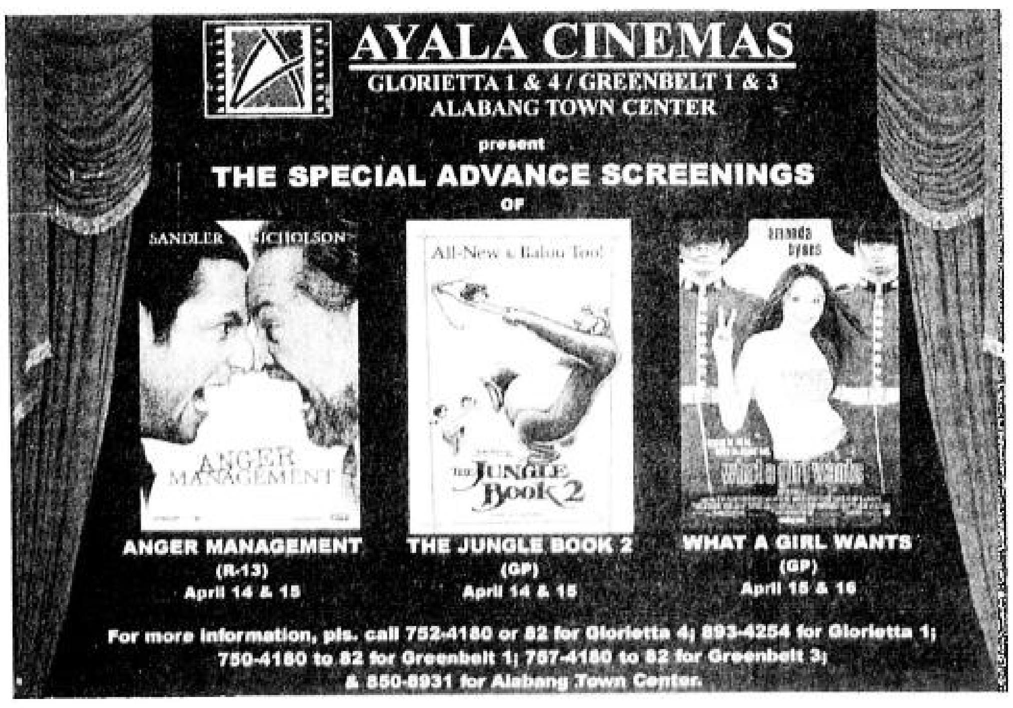
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GLORIETTA 1 & 4 / GREENBELT 1 & 3
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present
THE SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENINGS
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ANGER MANAGEMENT (R-13) April 14 & 15
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WHAT A GIRL WANTS (GP) April 15 & 16
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. AI-175, Series of 2003.
AYALA CENTER

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Strictly for ADULTS
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ang buong bayan sa BOMBANG pinasabog nina
MAUI at KATYA
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two girls. one WILD ride.
NOW SHOWING
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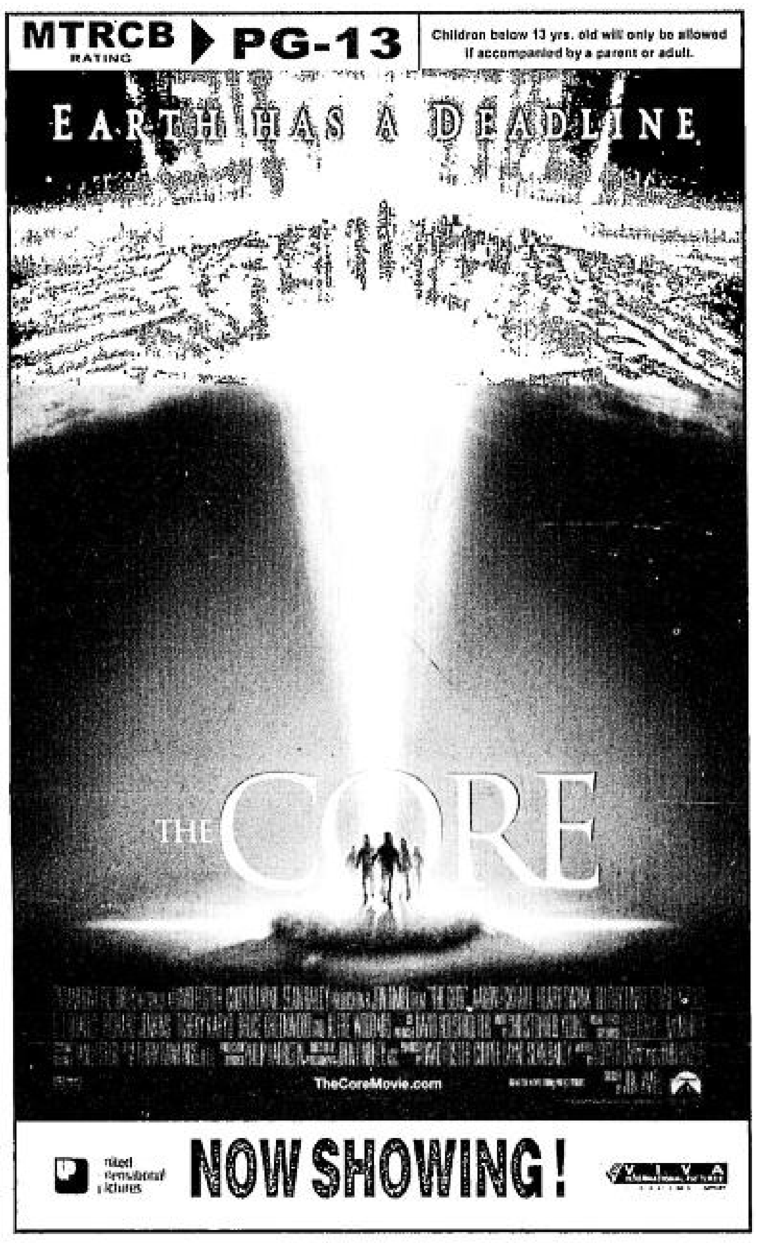
VIVA FILMS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THE CORE
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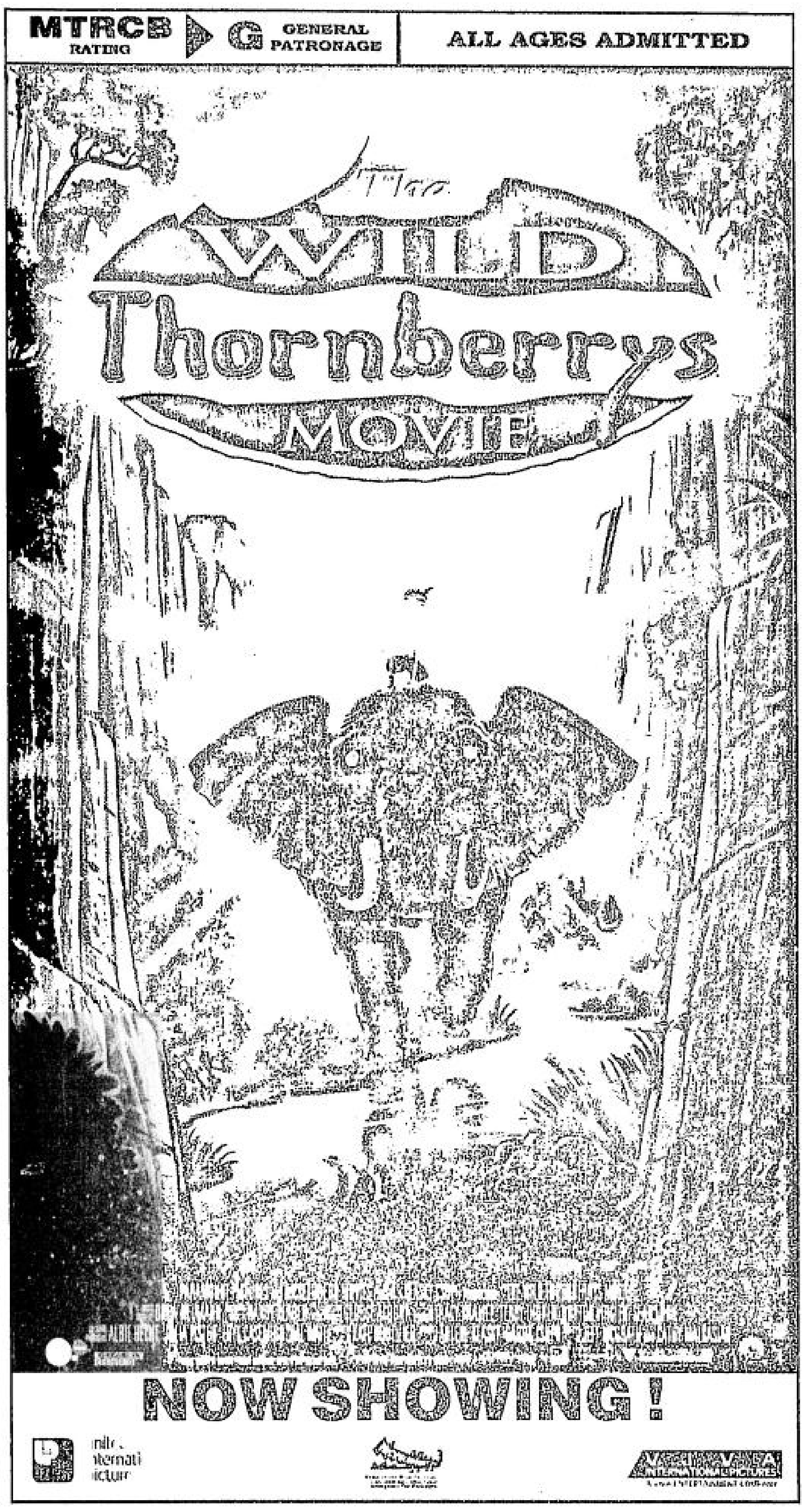
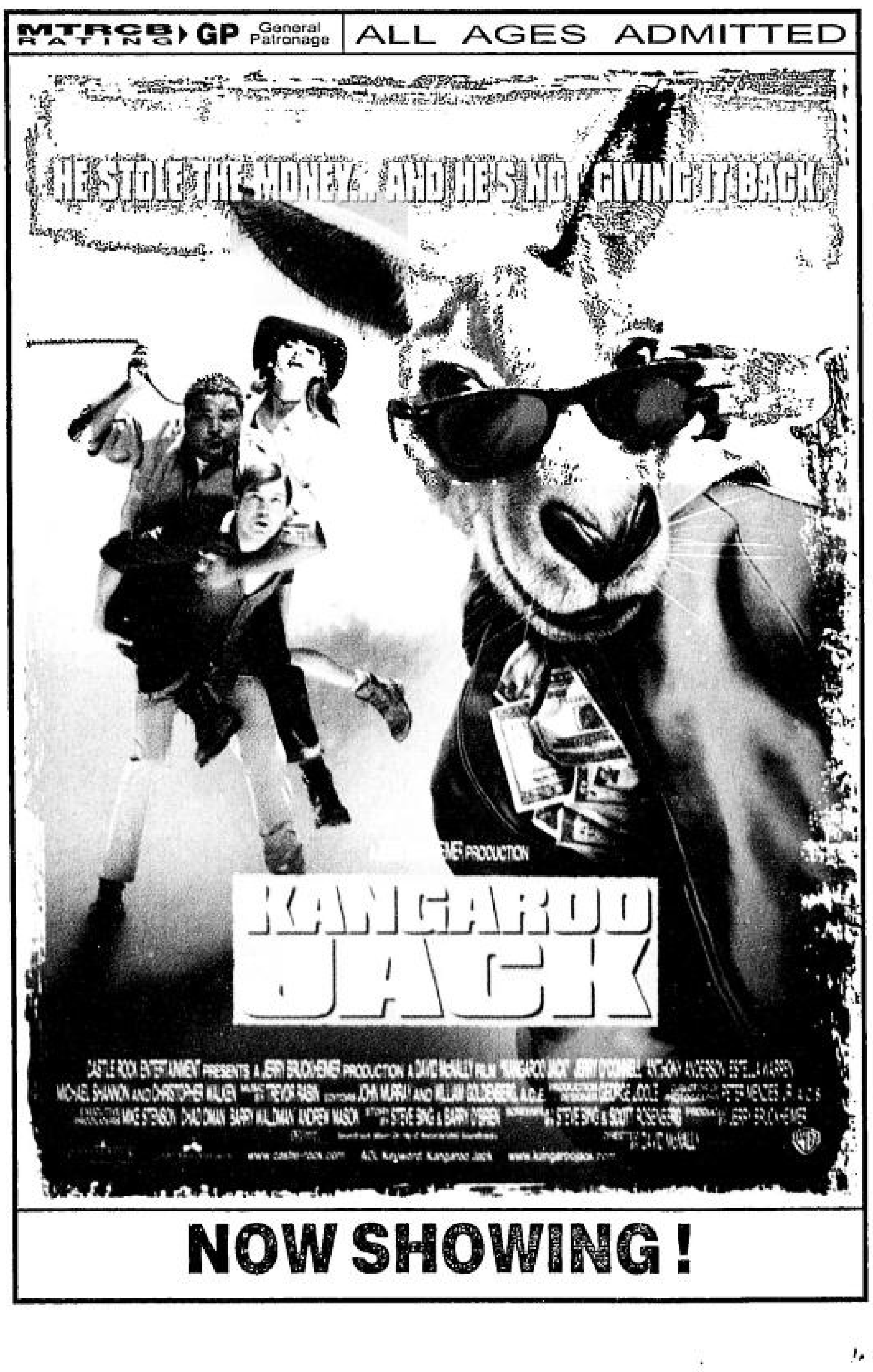
VIVA

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO/BETTER THAN SEX
ODEON	THE CORE
ODEON-2	BUSINESS FOR PLEASURE/KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ROBEN	SEX DRIVE
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	BELOW EXTREMIST
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	HAPPY HOUR
CORONET B	VIRGIN PEOPLE III
QUEZON-1	VIRGIN PEOPLE
REMAR	SEX DRIVE
REMAR-2	CORU QUIRINO STORY
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	YOU & ME AGAINST THE WORLD
B	RAMPADORA
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	KANGAROO JACK
CINEMA-2	THE RECRUIT
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	PALABAN
CINEMA-2	VIRGIN PEOPLE 3
CINEMA-3	HAPPY HOUR
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RECRUIT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	WISH MASTER
CINEMA-6	SEX DRIVE
CINEMA-7	PARU PARONG LIGAW
CINEMA-8	ASTERIX & OBELIX
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SOLARIS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	KANGAROO JACK
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	NATIONAL SECURITY
CINEMA-12	WILD THORNBERRY'S
CINEMA-14	THE CORE
CINEMA-15	WILLARD
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	DAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LINES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA


MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
The WILD Thornberrys MOVIE
NOW SHOWING!
VIVA INTERNATIONAL PICTURES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ALL AGES ADMITTED
HE STOLE THE MONEY... AND HE'S NOT GIVING IT BACK.
KANGAROO JACK
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FAMAS
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NIVEA
Surf
INQUIRER
LUPE
Chowking
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AguaVida
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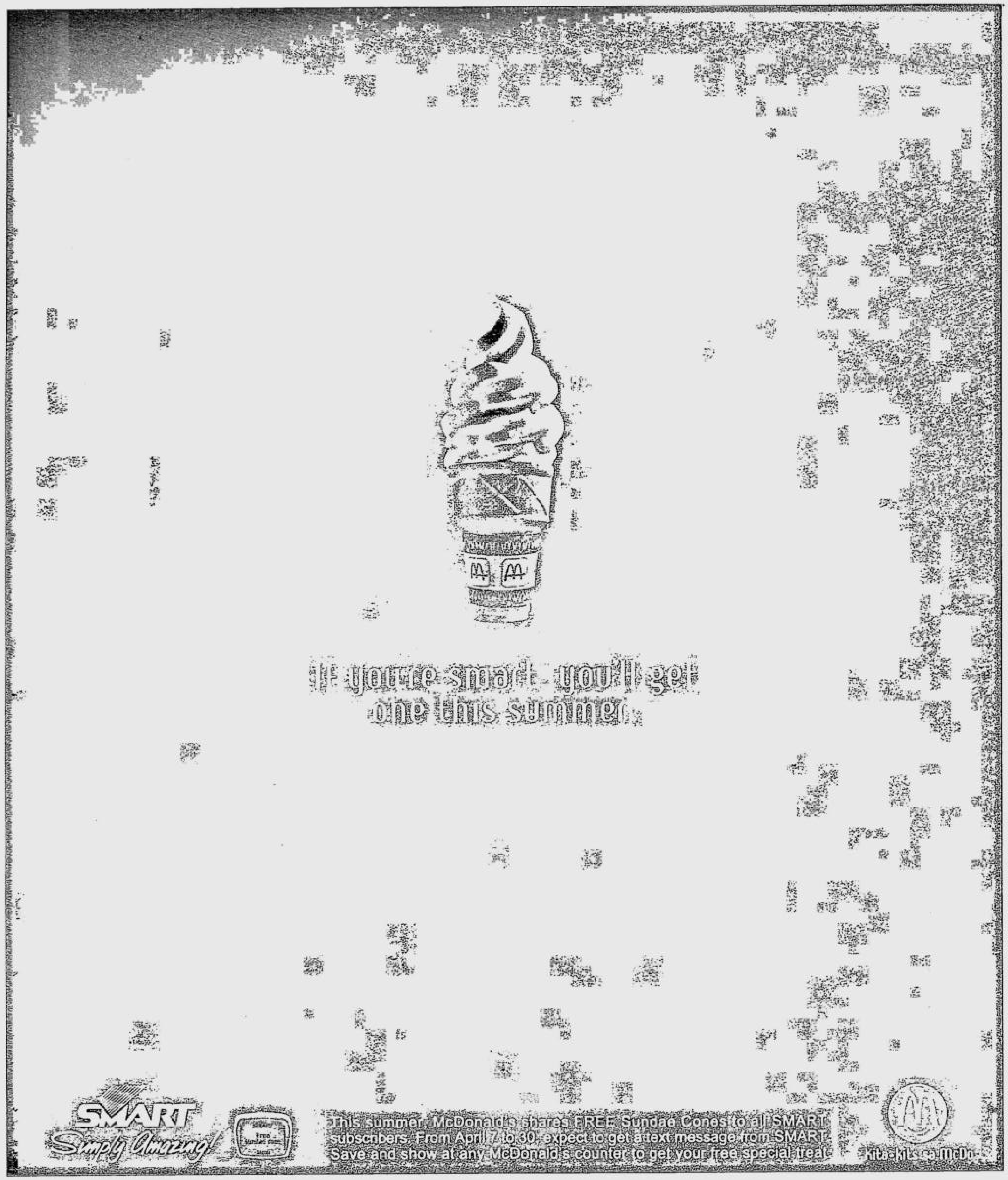
Philippine Airlines
SILVER SWAN



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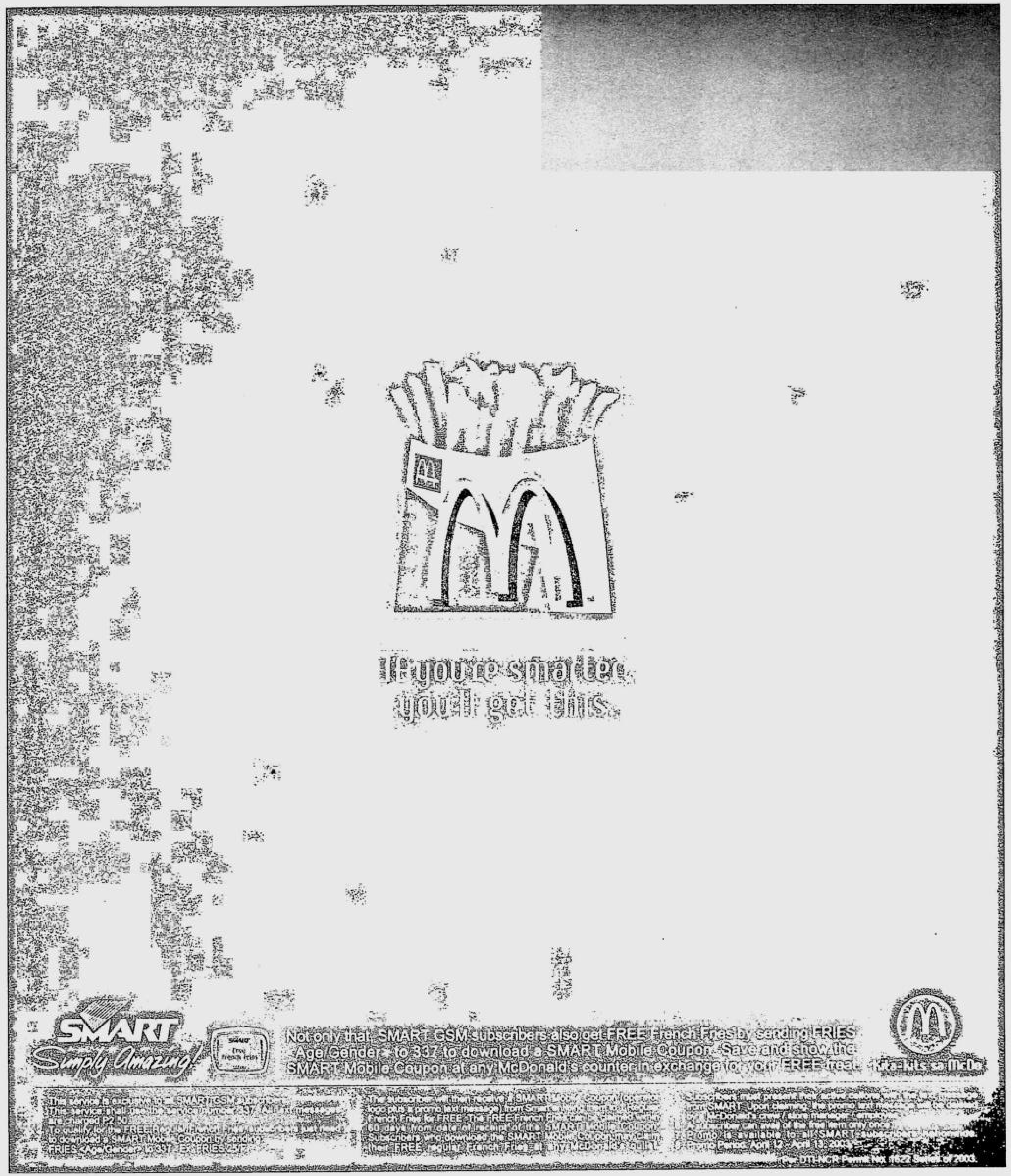
If you're smart, you'll get one this summer.

This summer, McDonald's shares FREE Sundae Cones to all SMART subscribers. From April 7 to 30, expect to get a text message from SMART. Save and show at any McDonald's counter to get your free special treat.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1622 Series of 2003.

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
P52.40 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 11, 2003

¥119.78 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 11, 2003

GOLD:
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APRIL 12, 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo @ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

Will your battery need first aid?

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PETRON LAKBAY ALALAY 2003

Guarantee facility for Iraq projects OKd

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Clarissa S. Batino

TO BOOST the chances of Filipino companies of cornering a substantial chunk of postwar Iraq reconstruction contracts, the Macapagal administration, through Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency or Philexim, is making available a guarantee facility that will back local companies doing projects in this war-torn Middle East country.

The guarantee will cover projects involving the rebuilding of essential infrastructure facilities in Iraq such as roads, air and sea ports, water, power generation, telecommunication, and oil facilities, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

Philexim president Joel Valdez said the agency was willing to guarantee up to $400 million per contract to facilitate the participation of Philippine construction firms and labor contractors in Iraq's postwar rehabilitation.

Valdez added that "we're also ready to help Philippine contractors in putting up the performance bonds quickly and at any price in order to get a project in Iraq."

A performance guarantee will enhance the chances of a domestic company of winning a project in Iraq.

Camacho said the guarantee facility will help local firms secure not only performance bonds but also bid bonds.

He said the guarantee facility would be limited to companies that have good credit record with Philexim.

Philexim, also known as Trade and Investment Development Corp. of the Philippines (Tidcorp), has apparently not forgotten the heavy losses incurred by its predecessor, Philguarantee, during the construction boom in the Middle East in the 1970s.

Aside from a clean record and good financial standing, Philexim will also require accreditation from Philippine Overseas Employment Administration for labor and manpower supply providers and authorization from the Philippine Overseas Construction Board.

Valdez expects the top five members of the Philippine Constructors Association Inc. led by EEI Corp. and DMCI Holdings Inc. to avail themselves of the facility once the Iraq postwar rebuilding projects get rolling.

The Philippines could get a windfall from the estimated $100-billion reconstruction of postwar Iraq because its pool of skilled and English-speaking workers were a high priority in anticipated job openings for construction workers, engineers and medical personnel.

Camacho said the government did not set a ceiling on the guarantee facility although the Philexim charter allowed the agency to provide guarantee of up to P100 billion. But Camacho said he believed the amount required would

GUARANTEE/B5

Weak demand to hit economy

A RECENT bounce in the peso and lower oil prices will help the Philippine economy, but concerns about its gaping fiscal deficit and weak US demand for its exports will rein in growth this year, a Reuters poll showed.

The latest quarterly poll of 10 economists on average saw gross domestic product growing 3.9 percent in 2003, up slightly from the 3.8 percent forecast in a similar poll in January but well below the government's estimated range of 4.2 to 5.2 percent.

For 2004, economists on average saw 4.1 percent growth.

"Official GDP releases will not reveal the true picture but a downturn this year will be apparent from slowing industrial activity, rising unemployment and declining corporate profits," CLSA Philippines Inc. said.

Weaker private consumption, which makes up around 80 percent of the country's gross domestic product, would also weigh on growth this year, it added.

The poll showed that inflation was seen at 4.2 percent this year from 3.1 percent in 2002, and rising to 4.9 percent in 2004.

The trade surplus was expected to fall to $630 million from $1.595 billion a year ago, but would rebound to $1.08 billion in 2004.

"We see inflation up a little from last year, mainly because of higher oil prices although there has been some relief on that front of late. The weaker peso has also provided a source of inflationary pressure," said David Cohen MMS International, director of macroeconomic analysis.

The local currency slumped to a 26-month low of over 55 to the dollar in mid-March, but has since rallied to six-month highs under 53 per dollar.

A weakening economy will aggravate the Philippines' chronic revenue under collection. Corruption, evasion and unwieldy tax laws have burdened the Philippines with sizeable deficits for many

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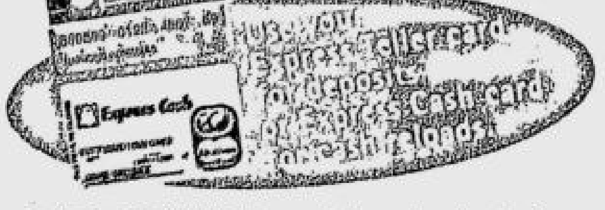

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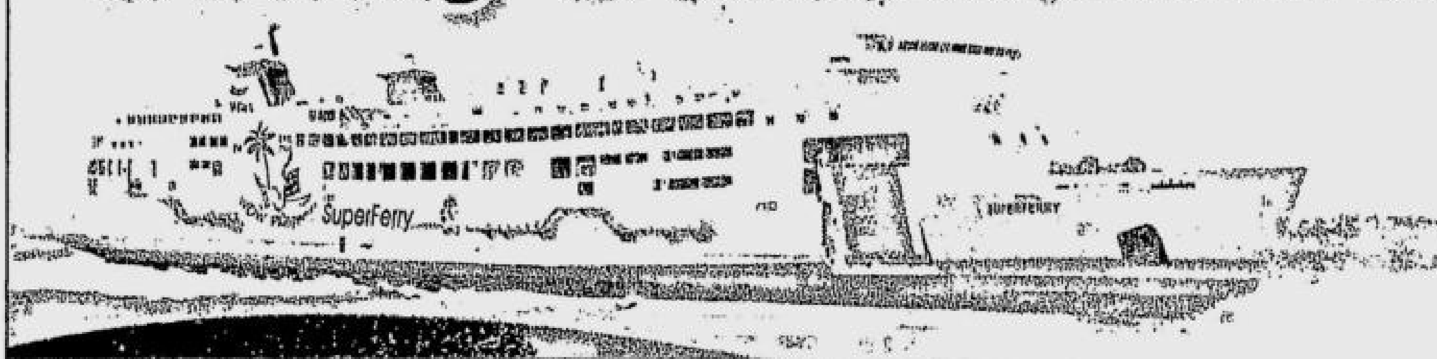

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Manila to All Ports

From MANILA to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Bacolod	Mon	11:00 am	SF 1	P14 P4	Tue	5:30 am	BREDCO	effective May 5
	Thu	11:00 pm	SF 14	South Harbor	Fri	6:30 pm	BREDCO	effective April 17
	Sun	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Mon	5:00 pm	BREDCO	
Cagayan de Oro	Mon	10:00 am	SF 14	South Harbor	Tue	7:30 pm	PUNTOD	effective April 14
	Wed	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Fri	1:30 pm	PUNTOD	
	Thu	11:00 pm	SF 14	South Harbor	Sat	10:00 am	PUNTOD	effective April 17
Cebu	Mon	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Tue	6:00 pm	CIP	
	Tue	3:00 pm	SF 12	South Harbor	Wed	11:59 am	CIP	
	Wed	4:00 pm	SF 1	P14 P4	Thu	2:00 pm	CIP	effective May 7
	Thu	7:30 pm	SF 12	South Harbor	Fri	4:30 pm	CIP	
	Fri	9:30 am	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Sat	6:30 am	CIP	effective May 2
	Sun	9:00 am	SF 12	South Harbor	Mon	6:00 am	CIP	
Coron	Fri	9:00 pm	SF 1	P14 P4	Sat	7:00 am	CORON	effective May 9
Cotabato	Fri	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Mon	5:00 am	POLLOC	
Davao	Mon	2:00 pm	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Wed	5:30 pm	SASA	effective May 5
	Sat	10:00 am	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Mon	5:00 pm	SASA	effective May 3
Dipolog	Fri	11:59 pm	OLOSH	P4	Sun	3:00 pm	DIP	
Dumaguete	Mon	10:00 pm	OLOM	P4	Wed	8:00 am	DGTE	
	Wed	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Fri	4:00 am	DGTE	
Dumaguit	Mon	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Tue	5:30 am	DUM	
	Wed	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Thu	5:30 am	DUM	
	Sat	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Sun	5:30 am	DUM	
Gen. Santos	Mon	2:00 pm	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Wed	7:30 am	MAKAR	effective May 5
	Sat	10:00 am	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Mon	7:00 am	MAKAR	effective May 3
Iligan	Fri	9:30 am	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Sat	4:30 pm	ILI	effective May 2
	Sun	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Tue	9:00 am	ILI	
Iloilo	Mon	10:00 am	SF 14	South Harbor	Tue	5:00 am	SNPED	effective April 14
	Thu	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P14 P4	Fri	5:00 pm	SNPED	effective May 1
	Fri	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Sat	9:00 pm	SNPED	
	Sat	10:00 am	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Sun	4:30 am	SNPED	effective May 3
Masbate	Tue	11:00 pm	OLOSH	P4	Wed	6:00 pm	MBT	
Nasipit/ Butuan	Mon	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Wed	10:30 am	NAS	
	Thu	11:59 pm	OLOM	P4	Sat	1:00 pm	NAS	
Ozamiz	Thu	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P14 P4	Sat	10:00 am	OZA	effective May 1
	Sun	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Tue	1:00 pm	OZA	
Palompon	Tue	11:00 pm	OLOSH	P4	Thu	3:00 am	PAL	
P. Princesa	Fri	9:00 pm	SF 1	P14 P4	Sat	6:00 pm	PPS	effective May 9
Roxas	Mon	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Tue	8:30 am	CULASI	
	Wed	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Thu	8:30 am	CULASI	
	Sat	2:00 pm	OLOL	South Harbor	Sun	8:30 am	CULASI	
Surigao	Mon	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Wed	4:30 am	SUR	
	Thu	11:59 pm	OLOM	P4	Sat	7:00 am	SUR	
Tagbilaran	Mon	10:00 pm	OLOM	P4	Wed	3:00 am	TAGBI	
	Fri	11:59 pm	OLOSH	P4	Sun	7:00 am	TAGBI	
Zamboanga	Mon	2:00 pm	SF 15/16	P14 South Harbor	Tue	5:30 pm	ZAMBO	effective May 5
	Fri	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	Sun	4:00 pm	ZAMBO	

From BACOLOD to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Cagayan	Fri	9:00 pm	SF 14	BREDCO	Sat	10:00 am	PUNTOD	
Iligan	Mon	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	Tue	9:00 am	ILI	
Ozamiz	Mon	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	Tue	1:00 pm	OZA	
Manila	Tue	10:30 am	SF 1	BREDCO	Wed	5:00 am	P14 P4	effective May 7
	Wed	3:30 pm	SF 14	BREDCO	Thu	11:00 am	South Harbor	effective April 14
	Sun	1:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	Mon	10:30 am	P4	

From CAGAYAN DE ORO to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Bacolod	Tue	11:59 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	Wed	1:00 pm	BREDCO	
Dumaguete	Fri	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	PUNTOD	Sat	6:30 am	DGTE	
Iloilo	Sat	7:00 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	Sun	8:00 am	SNPED	
Manila	Tue	11:59 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	Thu	11:00 am	South Harbor	effective April 14
	Fri	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	PUNTOD	Sun	11:30 am	P4	
	Sat	7:00 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	Mon	5:00 am	South Harbor	effective April 14

From CEBU to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Nasipit	Tue	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	CIP	Wed	10:30 am	NAS	
Surigao	Tue	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	CIP	Wed	4:30 am	SUR	
Iligan	Sat	9:00 am	SF 15/16	CIP	Sat	4:30 pm	ILI	
Manila	Mon	11:59 am	SF 12	CIP	Tue	9:00 am	South Harbor	
	Wed	5:00 pm	SF 12	CIP	Thu	2:00 pm	South Harbor	
	Thu	6:00 pm	SF 1	CIP	Fri	4:00 pm	P14 P4	effective May 9
	Fri	8:30 pm	SF 12	CIP	Sat	5:30 pm	South Harbor	
	Sun	9:00 am	SF 15/16	CIP	Mon	6:00 am	P14 South Harbor	effective May 5

From CORON to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
P. Princesa	Sat	8:00 am	SF 1	CORON	Sat	6:00 pm	PPS	
Manila	Sun	8:00 pm	SF 1	CORON	Mon	6:00 am	P14 P4	effective May 5

From COTABATO to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Iloilo	Mon	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	Tue	2:00 pm	SNPED	
Zamboanga	Mon	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	Mon	8:00 pm	Zambo	
Manila	Mon	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	Wed	2:00 pm	P4	

From DUMAGUETE to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Cagayan	Fri	7:00 am	SF 2/5/9	DGTE	Fri	1:30 pm	PUNTOD	
Tagbilaran	Wed	5:30 pm	OLOM	DGTE	Wed	8:30 pm	TAGBI	
Manila	Wed	2:00 pm	OLOM	DGTE	Thu	7:00 pm	P4	
	Sat	9:30 am	SF 2/5/9	DGTE	Sun	11:30 am	P4	

From DIPOLOG to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Tagbilaran	Sun	11:59 pm	OLOSH	DIP	Mon	6:00 am	TAGBI	
Manila	Sun	11:59 pm	OLOSH	DIP	Tue	5:00 pm	P4	

From DUMAGUIT to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Roxas	Tue	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	Tue	8:30 am	CULASI	
	Thu	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	Thu	8:30 am	CULASI	
	Sun	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	Sun	8:30 am	CULASI	
Manila	Tue	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	Wed	7:00 am	South Harbor	
	Thu	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	Fri	7:00 am	South Harbor	
	Sun	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	Mon	7:00 am	South Harbor	

From DAVAO to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Gen. Santos	Mon	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Tue	7:00 am	MAKAR	
	Wed	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Thu	7:00 am	MAKAR	
Iloilo	Mon	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Wed	10:00 am	SNPED	
Zamboanga	Wed	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Thu	9:30 pm	ZAMBO	
Manila	Mon	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Thu	6:30 am	P14 South Harbor	effective April 17 effective May 1
	Wed	11:00 pm	SF 15/16	SASA	Sat	3:30 am	South Harbor	effective May 3

From GEN. SANTOS to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Davao	Mon	9:00 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Mon	5:00 pm	SASA	
	Wed	9:30 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Wed	5:30 pm	SASA	
Iloilo	Tue	10:00 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Wed	10:00 am	SNPED	
Zamboanga	Thu	10:00 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Thu	9:00 pm	ZAMBO	
Manila	Tue	10:00 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Thu	6:30 am	P14 South Harbor	effective April 17 effective May 1
	Thu	10:00 am	SF 15/16	MAKAR	Sat	3:30 am	P14 South Harbor	effective May 3

From ILIGAN to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Cebu	Sat	10:10 pm	SF 15/16	ILI	Sun	6:00 am	CIP	
Ozamiz	Tue	11:00 am	SF 2/5/9	ILI	Tue	1:00 pm	OZA	
Tagbilaran	Tue	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ILI	Wed	6:30 am	TAGBI	
Manila	Tue	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ILI	Thu	11:59 am	P14 P4	effective May 1
	Sat	10:30 pm	SF 15/16		Mon	6:00 am	P14 South Harbor	effective May 5

From ILOILO to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Cagayan	Tue	7:00 am	SF 14	SNPED	Tue	7:30 pm	PUNTOD	
Davao	Sun	7:00 am	SF 15/16	SNPED	Mon	5:00 pm	SASA	
Gen. Santos	Sun	7:00 am	SF 15/16	SNPED	Mon	7:00 am	MAKAR	
Ozamiz	Fri	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	Sat	10:00 am	OZA	
Zamboanga	Sat	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	Sun	4:00 pm	ZAMBO	
Manila	Tue	5:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	Wed	2:00 pm	P4	
	Wed	11:59 am	SF 15/16	SNPED	Thu	6:30 am	P14 South Harbor	effective April 17 effective May 1
	Sun	10:00 am	SF 14	SNPED	Mon	5:00 am	South Harbor	effective April 21

From MASBATE to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Palompon	Wed	8:00 pm	OLOSH	MBT	Thu	3:00 am	PAL	
Manila	Thu	4:00 pm	OLOSH	MBT	Fri	11:00 am	P4	

From NASIPIT/BUTUAN to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Surigao	Wed	5:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	NAS	Wed	9:00 pm	SUR	
	Sat	6:00 pm	OLOM	NAS	Sat	10:30 pm	SUR	
Manila	Wed	5:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	NAS	Fri	4:00 am	P4	
	Sat	6:00 pm	OLOM	NAS	Mon	7:00 am	P4	

From OZAMIZ to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Bacolod	Sat	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	Sun	10:00 am	BREDCO	
Iligan	Tue	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	Tue	8:00 pm	ILI	
Manila	Tue	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	Thu	11:00 am	P14 P4	effective May 1
	Sat	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	Mon	10:30 am	P4	

From PALOMPON to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Masbate	Thu	7:00 am	OLOSH	PAL	Thu	2:00 pm	MBT	
Manila	Thu	7:00 am	OLOSH	PAL	Fri	11:00 am	P4	

From PUERTO PRINCESA to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Coron	Sun	9:00 am	SF 1	PPS	Sun	7:00 pm	CORON	
Manila	Sun	9:00 am	SF 1	PPS	Mon	6:00 am	P14 P4	effective May 5

From ROXAS to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Dumaguit	Tue	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Tue	2:00 pm	DUM	
	Thu	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Thu	2:00 pm	DUM	
	Sun	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Sun	2:00 pm	DUM	
Manila	Tue	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Wed	7:00 am	South Harbor	
	Thu	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Fri	7:00 am	South Harbor	
	Sun	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	Mon	7:00 am	South Harbor	

From SURIGAO to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Nasipit	Wed	6:30 am	SF 2/5/9	SUR	Wed	10:30 am	NAS	
	Sat	8:30 am	OLOM	SUR	Sat	1:00 pm	NAS	
Manila	Wed	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SUR	Fri	4:00 am	P4	
	Sat	11:59 pm	OLOM	SUR	Mon	7:00 am	P4	

From TAGBILARAN to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Dipolog	Sun	9:00 am	OLOSH	TAGBI	Sun	3:00 pm	DIP	
Dumaguete	Wed	5:00 am	OLOM	TAGBI	Wed	8:00 am	DGTE	
Manila	Wed	10:00 am	SF 2/5/9	TAGBI	Thu	11:59 am	P14 P4	effective May 1
	Mon	10:00 am	OLOSH	TAGBI	Tue	5:00 pm	P4	

From ZAMBOANGA to

	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL			REMARKS
	day	time	vessel	pier	day	time	pier	
Cotabato	Sun	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	Mon	5:00 am	POLLOC	
Davao	Tue	8:30 pm	SF 15/16	ZAMBO	Wed	5:30 pm	SASA	
Gen. Santos	Tue	8:30 pm	SF 15/16	ZAMBO	Wed	7:30 am	MAKAR	
Iloilo	Mon	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	Tue	2:00 pm	SNPED	
Manila	Thu	11:59 pm	SF 15/16	ZAMBO	Sat	3:30 am	P14 South Harbor	Effective May 3
	Mon	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	Wed	2:00 pm	P4	

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Gov't seen to sustain rise in revenue collection

By Clarissa S. Batino

REVENUE collection, particularly by the Bureau of Customs, continued to sustain its healthy trend in April, boosting the government's bid to contain the budget deficit within the P202-billion ceiling this year.

After exceeding its first quarter target by P4.3 billion, the Customs said collection from April 1 to 9 already exceeded the month-to-date target by P228 million.

The Customs collects almost 20 percent of the government's annual revenues while the Bureau of Internal Revenue accounts for about 80 percent.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho believed the upward trend in revenue collection could be sustained. He said the P131.3-billion collection target in the first quarter was substantially exceeded.

From January to April 9, the Customs collected P29.582 billion, higher by 17.9 percent or P4.498 billion than the target of P25.085 billion.

Compared with the previous year's level, Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo said the collection was 26.7 percent or P6.236 billion more than the P23.346 billion collection in the same period in 2002.

Preliminary numbers showed that while revenue collection in the first three months reached more than P138 billion or about P6.5 billion more than the target of P131.94 billion, spending exceeded the P187.116- billion target.

The government reportedly exceeded its P55.2-billion deficit target in the first three months.

Camacho said improving revenue collection should help the government contain the fiscal gap in the coming months. The government must contain the budget deficit to P202 billion this year from P210.7 billion in 2002.

Negros starts cattle fattening project

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A joint venture with the Australian Northern Territory set to start this year aims to create a cattle industry in Negros Occidental that will alleviate the poverty situation of the farm sector here.

This was disclosed recently by Paul Henderson, Trade Minister of the Australian Northern Territory, and Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Maranon, House committee chair on agriculture.

Henderson said young cattle from his country would be shipped to Negros Occidental for fattening to add 25 percent more value to each cow before going to the abattoir.

This means that, by the time the cattle is fattened, a farmer will earn 150 to 200 Australian dollars (P4,860 to P6,480) more per cow that arrives, Henderson said.

"This will be massive infusion of money into your local economy and for your farmers," he said.

"What we are trying to do is establish trade that has real value for farmers here in the Philippines as well as for the cattle producers in northern Australia," he added.

Henderson said it would be a "win-win" trading relationship because the meat from the cattle would be both sold locally and exported.

Henderson said they were hoping that the first shipment of 1,200 cattle would arrive this month.

Weak demand to hit economy

From page B1

years, putting a drag on government efforts to stimulate the domestic economy.

The government is aiming to peg the deficit at between 4.6 to 4.7 percent of GDP this year, or around P202 billion, after racking up a shortfall of P212.68 billion last year, or 5.6 percent of GDP.

The 2002 trade data is set to be adjusted this month after the government earlier revised the 2000 and 2001 figures to take into account under-reporting of imports. Few economists were willing to make projections for 2003 and 2004, preferring to wait for the restatement of the 2002 data.

Economists were hopeful that the impact of the war and the outbreak of a flu-like disease in the region would be minimal. *Reuters*

OPENING communication lines in the uplands.

Smart puts up cell sites in Banaue

TOURISTS no longer have to wait for their pictures to be developed or until they can get to a phone to share with friends and family the experience of standing before the world-renowned Banaue Rice Terraces.

Smart Communications Inc. recently activated a cell site in Banaue, one of the 11 towns in the province of Ifugao. This forms part of the company's program to install GSM cell sites in upland barangays, which is in line with the government's thrust to provide telephone lines in remote and far-flung areas.

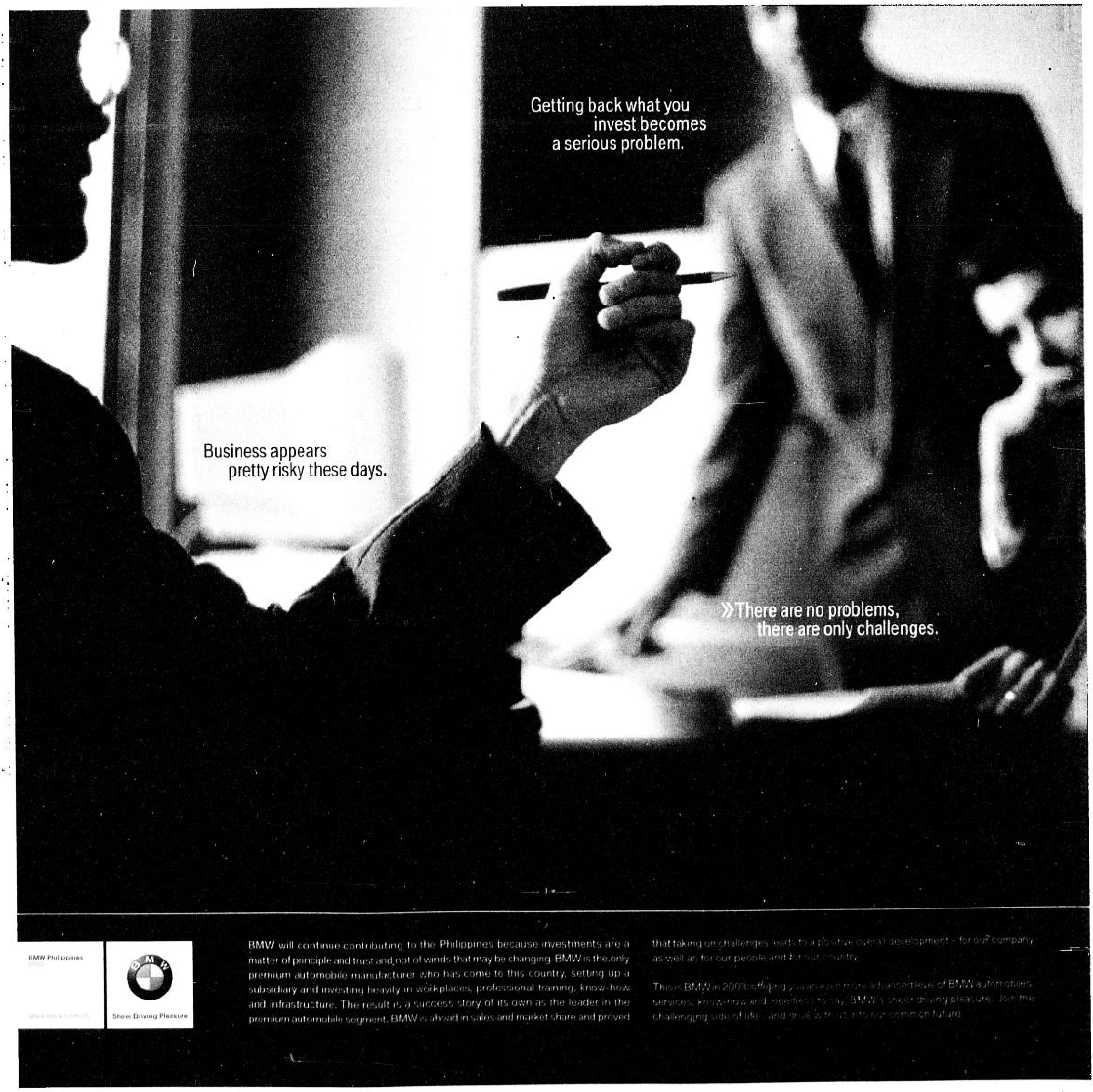
The convenience of being just a phone call away from home will also please tourists who flock to this town to view the agricultural feat that was declared in 1998 by the American Society of Civil Engineers as the eighth engineering wonder of the world and inscribed by the Unesco World Heritage list as a living cultural landscape.

The Ifugaos had painstakingly carved out the tiers of rice fields from the mountainside with their bare hands for over 3,000 years to create the Banaue Rice Terraces.

The influx of tourists caused Banaue to shift from agriculture to tourism-related livelihood such as the mass production of wood carvings and the establishment of lodgings and restaurants. Thus, the presence of Smart's GSM cell site is expected to boost commerce and tourism in the area.

Hotel and restaurant operators will find it easier to receive bookings and place orders for guest essentials. Wood carvers, metal smiths, weavers and other craft manufacturers will now also find markets more accessible.

Smart also powered a cell site in the neighboring province of Benguet to serve the needs of residents of Mankayan, the "copper town of Benguet" and site of Lepanto Mines.


Getting back what you invest becomes a serious problem.
Business appears pretty risky these days.
» There are no problems, there are only challenges.
BMW Philippines
Sheer Driving Pleasure

BMW will continue contributing to the Philippines because investments are a matter of principle and trust and not of winds that may be changing. BMW is the only premium automobile manufacturer who has come to this country, setting up a subsidiary and investing heavily in workplaces, professional training, know-how and infrastructure. The result is a success story of its own as the leader in the premium automobile segment. BMW is ahead in sales and market share and proved that taking on challenges leads to a positive overall development – for our company as well as for our people and for our country.

This is BMW in 2003: offering you an even more advanced level of BMW automobiles, services, know-how and [illegible] today. BMW's sheer driving pleasure. Join the challenging side of life – and drive with us into our common future.

Arroyo kin seen heading new board, as PSE forces election

By Elena R. Torrijos

AVOIDING a takeover by the Securities and Exchange Commission, stockholders of the Philippine Stock Exchange elected yesterday a new 15-man board.

The stock exchange gathered enough stockholders and proxies to call to order its annual stockholders' meeting despite objections by erstwhile opposition candidates who questioned the definition of a quorum.

"I trust these highly competent and enthusiastic people will lead the PSE to its rebirth in an atmosphere of cooperation," PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco said.

Yuchengco underscored the need to find new institutional partners, attract more listed companies and continuously educate the public about the benefits of investing in equities rather than in pyramid scams.

One of the brokers elected to the board was Alicia Arroyo, sister-in-law of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Also elected were brokers Joseph Madrid, William Ang, Gregorio Kilayko, Timothy Myron Papa and Marita Limlingan.

The four non-brokers elected to the board were lawyer Francis Lim, The Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd. chief executive Vicente Ayllon, San Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang and WG&A Philippines president Enrique Aboitiz.

They join incumbent PSE directors Cayetano Paderanga, Peter Favila and Tomas Apacible and PSE president Ernest Leung—all appointed by the Securities and Exchange Commission—in serving as non-broker independent directors in the PSE board.

The PSE election was supposed to have been held last Saturday, but it had to be moved because of a lack of quorum that resulted from a boycott spearheaded by erstwhile opposition broker Filomeno Francisco.

Francisco was earlier vying for PSE chair and led a slate of brokers against Arroyo's group.

The lack of quorum prompted the SEC to decide to form an oversight committee that would look over the workings of the stock exchange in case it failed to elect a board by April 15.

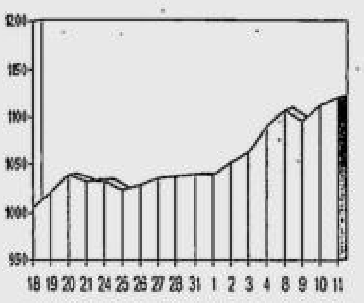
Francisco's group has been strongly pushing for the election of non-brokers through free baloting.

Non-brokers were crucial in the election of the PSE chair last year.

Under the rules drafted by the PSE elections committee chaired by SEC director Jose Aquino, four of the eight non-broker seats representing sectoral interests (issuer, market participant and investor) will be subjected to free elections, but the remaining four independent directors will be appointed by the committee.

Francisco's group boycotted the election to protest these rules.

Stocks end higher, driven by telecom firms



STOCKS ended higher yesterday driven by sharp gains in telecom stocks led by dominant carrier PLDT on expectations of solid growth in the first quarter, analysts said.

The Philippine main index rose 0.88 percent to close at 1,122.27. On the week, the market gained 2.9 percent and has so far been up 10.2 percent this year.

"Philippine telecoms' 2002 results were super. They outdid market expectations paving the way for a strong outlook for the year," said AB Capital economic analyst Jose Vistan.

"And based on latest reports from the National Telecommunications Commission, the penetration rate for mobile phone was still below 20 percent, meaning there's still room for growth."

Value turnover rose to P384.10 million from Thursday's P375.86 million. Gainers outclassed losers 36 to 25 and there were 38 stocks unchanged.

Analysts said sentiment was also boosted by news that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) upgraded the country's growth forecast to 4 percent from 3.8 percent. The IMF said the telecom sector appeared to be poised for another strong year.

"This raised hopes for a favorable decision by Calpers which is expected by April 15," Vistan said.

The board of Calpers, the California Public Employees' Retirement System which handles around $131 billion in funds, will meet on April 15 to consider various proposals whether to keep its investments in emerging markets, including the Philippines.

Vistan expected some minor profit-taking next week before the market closes on Thursday and Friday for Easter holidays.

"It's a short-trading week next week so we expect the market to consolidate and we see profit taking. The market is overbought and it has to consolidate its gains before making another rally," said Vistan who saw market support at 1,100 to 1,110 and resistance at 1,170.

PLDT, the country's largest telephone firm and a quarter owned by Hong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co. Ltd., rose 4.93 percent or P17.5 to P372.5.

Second ranked Globe Telecom—which is jointly owned by conglomerate Ayala Corp., SingTel and Deutsche Telekon—gained 4.84 percent or P30 to end at P650.

Investors however continued to dump shares of the country's top electricity distributor Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) after the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld an earlier ruling that it had over billed customers for years and must give them refunds.

The firm had earlier warned that it might post a loss in 2002 and said a large refund, reportedly over $500 million, would put it in jeopardy of defaulting on debt payments due this year.

The B-shares of Meralco which are open to foreigners, dropped 8 percent or P1 to P11.50. *Reuters*

Even tax cheats have rights, BIR officials stress

By Michelle V. Remo

REVENUE officials said yesterday the Bureau of Internal Revenue would have to observe due process in prosecuting individuals or companies suspected of tax fraud.

In an interview, BIR Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs Jose Mario Buñag said the BIR was serious in its efforts to deal with tax fraud so that it can help improve the government's cash position.

Buñag stressed, however, that the BIR would have to pursue its campaign while observing the rights of the individuals or companies involved.

He said establishments found to have committed tax violations were only subject to penalties the first and second instances of the offense.

They will only be shut down on the third offense, Buñag said.

"The BIR is doing the best it can to go after erring establishments, but due process has to be followed," Buñag said.

The BIR was challenged earlier to prosecute establishments that it found to have violated tax rules during its tax compliance saturation drives.

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda was one of those who urged the BIR to prosecute the establishments caught during BIR's saturation drive.

The April 2 drive covered big fast-food chains like Max's Restaurant, Pizza Hut, Tropical Hut Hamburger.

Outlets of these fast-food chains along Doña Soledad Avenue in Parañaque were found to have violated some of the country's tax laws.

"The BIR tax mapping drive is not a mere fanfare, as results are there to prove the bureau is serious in its campaign," BIR district director Danilo Duncano, who led a team that went on the saturation drive, said.

According to Buñag, once the BIR finds one establishment to be violating tax rules, a report is immediately submitted to the concerned BIR district office that, in turn, will turn in the report to the BIR main office if the violation is not settled.

Ayala Land, Metro Pac still unable to close deal

By Elena R. Torrijos

METRO Pacific Corp. said yesterday it would take 15 more days, or until April 17 this year, for it to close a deal that would give Ayala Land Inc. and the Campos family 50.4 percent of Bonifacio Land Corp.

"There are no stumbling blocks to the transaction. It's just that this is highly complicated, and the conditions precedent are quite numerous," Metro Pacific vice president David Nugent said in an interview.

Nugent said the two sides were still working on the final documentation of related transactions and on obtaining certain government approvals and third-party consents.

In November last year, Ayala Land and the Camposes' Evergreen Holdings Inc. agreed to allow Metro Pacific, local holding firm of Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd., to use its 50.3-percent stake in Bonifacio Land to pay for a $90-million loan that the Ayala-Campos group would assume from Larouge BV.

In a statement yesterday, Metro Pacific said the extension of the assignment of the outstanding loan from Larouge to Ayala Land and Evergreen had been "mutually and amicably agreed upon by all parties concerned."

As soon as an agreement is closed, Metro Pacific will be left with a 23.5-percent stake in Bonifacio Land. It will also get 10.4 hectares at the Fort Bonifacio area.

The property will represent payment for P3.2 billion advanced by Metro Pacific to develop the Bonifacio Global City.

Ayala water firm says to pass '02 net

MANILA Water Company Inc. has expressed confidence it will surpass its financial performance last year, as it continues to improve its system connections and deliver more water to customers in Metro Manila's eastern zone.

Company officials said yesterday Manila Water would be able to chalk up a net income higher than 2002's P553 million by year's end.

"We expect to do better this year, as we have already booked financial losses related to the peso depreciation in the last five years," Manila Water chief financial officer and treasurer Sherisa Nuesa said in a news conference.

In an interview, Manila Water president Antonino Aquino said a further reduction in Manila Water's systems losses could be converted into bigger water volumes delivered to customers.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System-Regulatory Office has allowed Manila Water to increase its rates by P14 per cubic meter effective January. *Christine A. Gaylican*

Nenaco sees ₱12M from new scheme

By Abigail L. Ho

NEGROS Navigation Co. Inc., a subsidiary of property developer Metro Pacific Corp., said yesterday it expected to earn at least P12 million a year from its scheme to use unused vessel space for loose cargo.

In a statement, the company said it was now in the final stages of completing its "LCL (loose cargo loading) Express Cargo Onboard" project.

Nenaco said it was hoping that with this scheme, companies would continue using ships to move their goods.

Most local shippers in ports with less sailing frequency had begun shifting to airfreight to move their goods because it usually takes weeks to fill up a container before it can be loaded into vessels.

"With the new LCL Express Cargo Onboard, the consignee can immediately withdraw the cargo as soon as the vessel reaches the port. The project will reduce clearing time from an average of six hours to only about one hour," Nenaco said.

The LCL Express Cargo Onboard is designed for high revenue-yielding cargoes that are charged at premium levels because of their nature, it said.

These cargoes are those that fall under the "Class A classified" category, which are kept in identified secured slots within a vessel.

The new scheme is seen to be in full swing by next month for outbound cargo shipment.

Lead proponents for the project are the people behind the Nenaco Freight Power think tank team, including vice president for national freight Gery Enciso, freight booking office assistant vice president Fred Pajo and freight sales manager Jun Manalang.

ABS-CBN 2002 profit falls

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., the largest radio and television network in the Philippines, said on Friday its 2002 net income plunged to P166 million.

The country's media giant, a unit of the Benpres Holdings Corp. conglomerate that is controlled by the Lopez family, posted a net income of P1.48 billion in 2001.

But ABS-CBN, which has an average audience share of 45 percent, said profits for the first quarter of 2003 were P107 million based on preliminary numbers, sharply higher than the P3.82 million during January to March 2002.

ABS-CBN said its net revenues for 2002 rose nearly 6 percent to P10.9 billion from P10.3 billion in 2001.

ABS-CBN shares closed 11.32 percent higher at P14.75 on Friday. *Reuters*

INTEREST RATES

April 8, 2003—MART 1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 April 8, 2003 (%)	MART1 April 4, 2003 (%)
1 Month	7.9496	7.9400
3 Months	8.3135	8.3904
6 Months	8.9333	8.9417
1 Year	9.5462	9.5539
2 Years	10.5865	10.5962
3 Years	11.5788	11.5923
4 Years	12.4212	12.4346
5 Years	12.6096	12.6385
7 Years	13.1654	13.1827
10 Years	13.2308	13.2538
20 Years	13.4769	13.5635
25 Years	14.0346	14.1135

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, April 11, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16	16	16	16	15,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	36	36	35.5	36	326,300
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26.5	26	26.5	124,300
First E-Bank Corp.	0.5	0.55	0.5	0.55	150,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28.5	29	28.5	29	256,200
Philippine National Bank	24.25	25	24.25	25	30,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10	10	10	10	2,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.4	95,000
First Abacus Financial	0.55	0.72	0.55	0.72	320,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1310	1310	310
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1015	1030	1015	1030	2,800
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	13.75	14.75	13.5	14.75	81,000
Diversified Fin. Network	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	20,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.72	4,560,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	620	660	620	650	13,660
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	1,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.33	0.38	0.33	0.37	5,530,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	352.5	375	352.5	372.5	167,290
Ivantage Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.37	0.39	307,570,000
Philweb Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	16,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.2	8.2	7.6	7.9	591,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.75	12	11	11.5	3,158,900
Petron Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.02	2.06	8,645,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.44	1,962,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.44	2.6	2.44	2.55	1,904,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.48	0.5	3,320,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.71	0.71	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.28	2.3	2.28	2.3	127,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.75	17	16.25	16.5	811,700
RFM Corp.	0.76	0.77	0.76	0.77	130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	31,600
San Miguel Corp. B	67	67	66.5	67	47,200
Universal Robina Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	42,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	210,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	80,000
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.4	2,950,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.36	2.36	2.34	2.36	999,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.029	0.026	0.028	7,600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	5,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.15	370,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.19	0.125	0.19	520,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.24	28,550,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	120,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.25	0.215	0.235	7,160,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.3	615,000
Global Equities Inc	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	200,000
Ionics Inc.	0.76	0.77	0.76	0.76	500,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.5	296,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,700,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	750,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	50,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,680,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.195	0.2	0.185	0.195	4,860,000
Music Corp.	.3300	.34	.33	.34	550,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	21,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	500,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	150,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	400,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	120,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.37	0.31	0.37	450,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	10,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	515,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.75	16.75	16.5	16.5	112,600
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	3,440,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	13.5	14.75	13.5	14.75	464,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref.	775	775	775	775	20
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	1,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	3,119,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	300,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	950,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,720,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.96	1	0.96	0.99	6,370,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.035	0.07	0.035	0.07	12,600,000
SM Development Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	40,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	749,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	140,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2	2	2	2	20,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	2,320,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.005	0.0046	0.005	118,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	50,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	8,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	50,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	20,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	400,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,334,410	27,080,605.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	426,417,000	327,681,435.00
PRO	26,048,000	28,847,000.00
Mining	120,630,000	1,211,900.00
OIL	12,470,000	63,050.00
GRAND TOTALS:	586,899,410	384,883,990.00

CURRENCIES

April 11, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.927214	1.000000	52.540000
Japan	Yen	0.007748	0.008356	0.439000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.458322	1.572800	82.634900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.118885	0.128218	6.736600
Switzerland	Franc	0.668214	0.720669	37.863900
Canada	Dollar	0.638137	0.688231	36.159700
Singapore	Dollar	0.522374	0.563380	29.600000
Australia	Dollar	0.562186	0.606318	31.855900
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.459649	2.652731	139.374500
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.247257	0.266667	14.010700
Brunei	Dollar	0.520907	0.561798	29.516900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000113	0.005900
Thailand	Baht	0.021654	0.023354	1.227000
UAE	Dirham	0.252454	0.272272	14.305200
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.078500	56.664400
Argentina	Peso	0.321391	0.346620	18.211400
Brazil	REAL	0.287687	0.310270	16.301600
Denmark	Kroner	0.134770	0.145349	7.636600
India	Rupee	0.019603	0.021142	1.110800
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.244036	0.263193	13.828200
Mexico	New Peso	0.086680	0.093484	4.911600
New Zealand	Dollar	0.506452	0.546209	28.697800
Norway	Kroner	0.126802	0.136756	7.185200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016064	0.017325	0.910300
South Africa	Rand	0.119430	0.128805	6.767400
Korea	Won	0.000754	0.000813	0.042700
Sweden	Kroner	0.109280	0.117858	6.192300
Syria	Pound	0.022077	0.023810	1.251000
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026720	0.028818	1.514100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000581	0.000627	0.032900

DISCLOSURES

LA Tondeña Distillers Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 6, 2 p.m., at Magellan's Galley, San Miguel Properties Center, Mandaluyong City. Only stockholders as of March 14 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BANCO De Oro Universal Bank has moved its annual stockholders' meeting to May 26, 3 p.m., at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Stockholders as of April 24 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PHILEX Mining Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 23, 2 p.m., at the Function Modules ABCD of the Manila Galleria Suites, Pasig City. Stockholders as of April 30 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

WISE Holdings Inc. has moved its annual stockholders' meeting from May 26 to July 21 to give the new auditors more time to complete the company's financial reports. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

2-month OFW dollar remittances up 5.5%

DOLLAR remittances from the country's eight million overseas workers reached $1.141 billion in the first two months of the year, up 5.5 percent from $1.081 billion in the same period last year.

In January, the level was placed at $611 million. The February dollar remittance figure of $530 million was slightly down from $530.68 million in the same month last year. This was despite a 5.6 percent improvement in the number of newly hired and rehired OFWs to 70,098 from 66,380.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said Filipinos working overseas might have held on to their dollars in February, when the peso was volatile, in anticipation of a continued depreciation of the peso.

A weaker peso means higher peso returns for the dollars sent or brought home by OFWs. The low level of OFW remittances in February added pressure on the local currency during the month up to March 12, when it hit an all-time low of 55.099 to $1. The peso, however, has since recovered to close at 52.40 to $1 yesterday from 52.53 Thursday.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the central bank adjusted the January remittances level upward after an item "was reclassified as remittance from OFWs."

While the level of newly-hired and rehired OFWs slid in January, the increase in deployment in February pushed the two-month level to 165,907, up 0.4 percent from 165,198 last year, according to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

In 2002, the level of freshly-hired and re-hired OFWs reached 891,908, up from 867,599 the previous year.

Last year, the country's eight million overseas workers sent home $6.933 billion, the highest level of OFW remittance in history. This, however, was lower than the government's target by $1 billion.

Last year's remittances were 15 percent higher than the $6.031 billion in 2001. This year, the central bank expects OFW remittances to increase by 20 percent from the 2002 level.

The dollar remittances from OFWs represent nearly 85 percent of the country's gross foreign exchange earnings. It normally accounts for the half-percentage-point difference between the gross domestic product and the gross national product.

Monetary authorities count on OFW remittances in boosting the supply of dollars in the spot market.

Gov't wooing another US automaker

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WITH Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc.'s sustained exports of sedans and sport-utility vehicles, the Board of Investments is now wooing another major American automaker to use the Philippines as an export base for completely built-up units in the region.

Among the United States' top automakers, only Ford has so far invested in an assembly plant in the Philippines.

General Motors Corp. and DaimlerChrysler Corp. have local distributorship agreements selling vehicles assembled overseas.

While the Department of Trade and Industry did not identify the prospective American assembler, it has been reported earlier that DaimlerChrysler was currently choosing between the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia as potential relocation sites for its struggling factory operations in China.

General Motors had already spurned the Philippines as an auto assembly site years ago when it placed its money on Thailand.

Trade and finance officials offered General Motors a number of tax and non-tax incentives, but the world's biggest automaker decided that Thailand's bigger market offered more opportunities than the Philippines' market.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II expressed confidence that the success of Ford's export program in the Philippines would convince other auto companies to put up assembly plants in the Philippines and transform the country into a CBU exporter.

The BOI reported yesterday that Ford shipped some 3,667 completely built-up units of the Lynx C-sedan and Escape to Indonesia and Thailand in the first three months of the year.

Ford Philippines president Henry Co said first-quarter exports generated around $2.3 million in revenues for the Philippine government.

Ford, which started its export program under the Asean Industrial Cooperation agreement, is projecting exports of 14,000 units this year.

In exchange for its sedan and sport-utility exports, Ford will bring Ranger pickup trucks from its Thai factory to the Philippines.

Ford has urged the trade department to provide between $600 and $1,000 in subsidies for each vehicle sold to other countries to encourage more assemblers to invest in assembly plants in the country and sustain the export of automobiles in the long-term.

Guarantee facility for Iraq projects OKd

From page B1

not reach that level.

The move of Philexim was in line with the requests of business groups for the government to pinpoint business opportunities arising from the reconstruction of Iraq.

Already, construction firms like DMCI Holdings Inc. of the Consunji family and EEI Corp. of the Yuchengco group have stepped up their hiring and training of personnel in anticipation of the huge demand for construction workers in that country. EEI Corp., according to business leader Donald Dee, had hired 400 additional workers to meet the anticipated increase in the Middle East's labor requirements. Philexim would require firms applying for a guarantee to have a contractors' accreditation from the Philippine Overseas Construction Board, good financial standing and performance.

Aside from jobs and construction contracts, the Philippines is also looking at opportunities to supply food and other commodities to the war-ravaged country. State-run Philippine International Trading Corp. is working on an oil-for-food swap scheme.

Destiny in talks with potential partners

By Abigail L. Ho

CABLE operator Destiny Cable Inc. said it was not about to be acquired by any entity in the near future, although it did admit that talks with potential partners were still ongoing.

The company was reacting to reports that said Destiny would be acquired by Lopez-owned SkyCable Central CATV Inc., which owns two-thirds of leading cable operator Beyond Cable Holdings Inc.

"There is no definitive agreement of any type at this time. However, we will continue to explore various possible business options with potential partners that will enhance our ability to deliver better service to our customers. Anything beyond this is purely speculative at this point," said Beda Manalac, vice president of Destiny's parent firm Solid Group Inc.

Late last year, Destiny and Beyond Cable signed a memorandum of understanding to conduct negotiations for a possible partnership.

In an earlier interview, Manalac said there was nothing concrete about the agreement. It only opened talks between the two cable operators to find out if consolidating their operations would be of help in making both of them more viable in the longer term.

He added that Destiny was willing to open talks with any potential partner and not just Beyond Cable.

In a separate interview, SkyCable vice president for programs acquisition Juno Henares-Chuidian said the whole industry was actually moving towards consolidation, but this did not necessarily mean that SkyCable would be acquiring Destiny any time soon.

She even declined to confirm talks with Destiny, although she said Beyond Cable was always in talks with "others" in the market.

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WHO calls for int'l action to prevent childhood deaths

By Charles E. Buban

LIKE children who get report cards, the world has just been graded on the well-being of its younger inhabitants—the 1.8 billion people aged up to 14 years.

The grade could hardly be considered "passing" as millions of children, which make up 30 percent of the world's more than six billion people, are continuously suffering from long-term damage to their health every year from exploitation, abuse and violence.

According to the report issued by the World Health Organization, more than five million children die every year from diseases, infections and accidents related to their surrounding environments.

The WHO called for urgent and concerted international action, saying even simple efforts could help a lot in preventing childhood deaths caused primarily by acute respiratory infections, vector-borne diseases such as malaria and diarrhea, and accidents on roads and near homes.

Children's environment

A growing number of diseases in children are linked to the unsafe environments in which they live, play, learn and grow, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

In a statement issued last Monday, World Health Day, Unicef executive director Carol Bellamy said governments and communities have to address both the physical environment in which children spend their days, and the "protective" environment that is essential to keeping every child out of harm's way.

Unicef defined a protective environment as one in which:

- Communities and families are committed to upholding of child rights.
- Laws are put in place to protect children and prosecute offenders.
- Laws are consistently enforced.
- Media highlights the issues and challenges discriminatory attitudes.
- Adults—parents, teachers, religious leaders and others—who spend time with children are able to recognize the signs of abuse and respond accordingly.

Top killers

The WHO also reported that children under 5, who comprise only 10 percent of the world's population, currently bear 40 percent of the global disease burden.

Air pollution from the inappropriate combustion of fossil fuels for cooking and heating causes respiratory infections, which are responsible for up to 20 percent or around two million deaths in children under 5 years of age.

The second biggest child killer is diarrhea, with around 1.3 million children each year dying from it. The disease is related to inadequate water and sanitation.

Malaria kills approximately one million children every year, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa.

On the other hand, traffic accidents and drowning are the leading causes of children's death from unintentional injury worldwide.

Inexpensive strategies

The WHO suggested several inexpensive strategies to combat these threats:

- Washing hands with soap or ash before preparing food, before meals and after defecating significantly reduces the risk of diarrhea, even when the overall quantity of water available is limited.
- Ensuring safe sanitary facilities and the use of separate latrines for boys and girls encourages latrine use and reduces disease transmission. Proper waste management and the relocation of waste dumps away from human settlements protects children from scavenging and exposure to hazards.
- Safe water storage in the home and simple treatment when water quality is in doubt leads to proven health benefits.
- Good ventilation in homes, improved cooking stoves and clean household fuels decrease indoor air pollution and the incidence of acute respiratory infections.
- Screening of doors, windows and eaves, together with the use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, is a very effective protection against malaria.
- Advocating for safer roads, regulating traffic and lowering speed limits reduce the risk of injury and death which children face from road accidents.

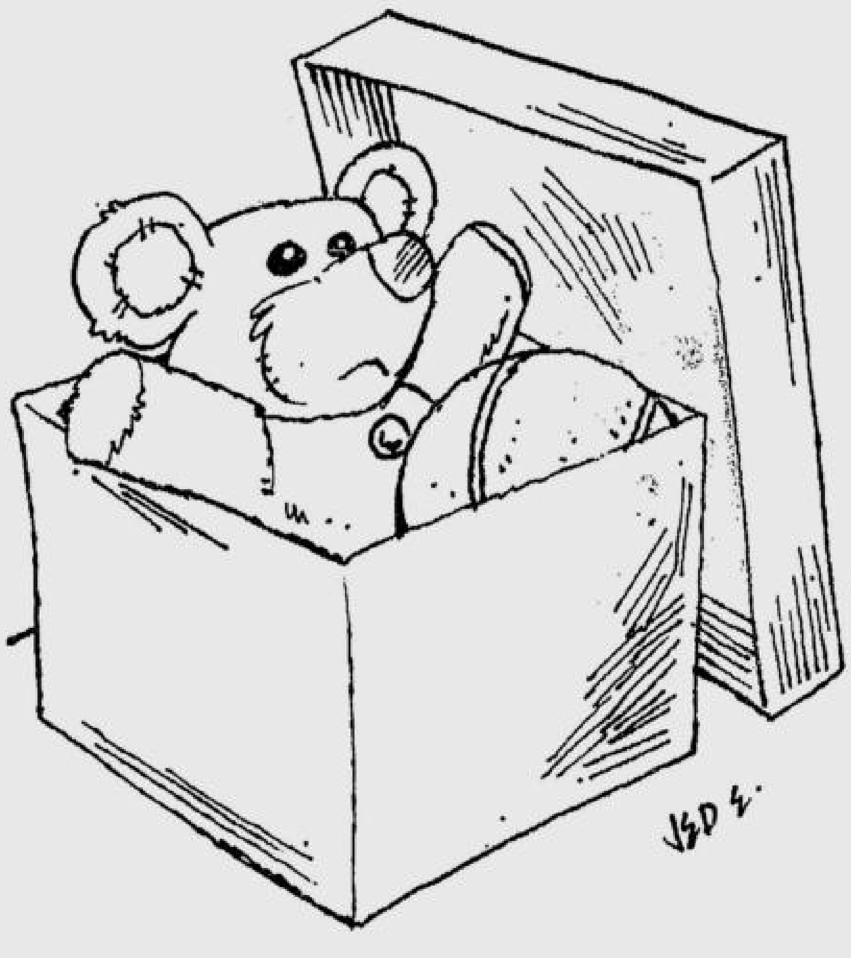


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Paranoid about SARS

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

ON MY way back from a recent trip abroad, I noticed many travelers in the airport and even inside the plane wearing face masks, making them look like surgeons about to excise a cyst. The infamous SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) has certainly taken the fun out of traveling to other countries, except perhaps to a pathologically adventurous few who find more fun and excitement traveling to SARS-infected countries and not taking any precautions at all.

On the other extreme are travelers whose fear of the SARS virus is so overwhelming they think the common cold or sore throat they have might already be SARS. In most instances, it's a false alarm.

There's so much fuss about SARS. Hopefully, the culprit bug will be identified soon and the effective antimicrobial known. At this point no one can say for sure what it really is. Is it a modern type of a deadly plague? Could it be a form of bioterrorism? Or is it simply a sporadic outbreak of an atypical type of respiratory infection—similar to the avian flu—which is expected every now and then?

Identifying the bug

They've somehow identified the family to which the SARS bug belongs, but it's a big family and determining which of them is responsible for SARS is still a long shot. But it looks like our scientists are catching up on the SARS virus and proper identification and treatment should be coming soon.

Until that happens though, SARS remains a worldwide health threat. And we better take it seriously.

"The world needs to work together to find its cause, cure the sick and stop its spread," says Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, WHO director general.

The symptoms of SARS include initial flu-like illness characterized by rapid onset of high fever followed by muscle aches, headache and sore throat, dry cough and shortness of breath. The infection rapidly progresses and is followed by bilateral pneumonia. Some cases deteriorate to acute respiratory distress which would require a mechanical respirator to assist the patient's breathing.

Nonspecific symptoms

The big dilemma is that the symptoms for SARS are nonspecific and are usually seen in ordinary types of respiratory infections.

It is understandable that one would panic when these symptoms are present. But unless one has had close contact with another person who has been diagnosed with SARS or has recently traveled to areas where SARS cases were reported, it is highly improbable that it is SARS.

In fact, even in high-risk patients—more than 60 so far had been admitted in local hospitals for possible SARS—none turned out to have the dreaded disease.

Dr. Camilo Roa Jr., a well respected pulmonologist at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine, allays the undue fear of the public regarding the actual risk of getting infected with the mystery disease.

"The public should not panic since the disease is rare in a community setting," says Dr. Roa. "Case fatality risk of those who went on to develop pneumonia is only 5 percent, which is much lower than the common community acquired pneumonia in the elderly."

According to the Department of Health, there is still no reported case of SARS in the Philippines, which can make one feel confidently safe about domestic travel. Several Filipinos suspected to be possible SARS victims have all been given a clean bill of health, definitely not the way SARS would behave in a patient.

Healthcare heroes

The DOH urged the public to stay calm because aside from healthcare workers and those who take care of the sick, the likelihood of an average Filipino getting the infection is rare, especially with the strict quarantine precautions they're enforcing.

Speaking of healthcare workers who are at high risk of getting the SARS virus, we have to commend them for their heroic act, attending to their SARS patients despite the overwhelming risk of infection. Top health officials in Hong Kong and Hanoi have already succumbed to the disease.

Precautions

Someone sent me an e-mail message from Dr. Justin Wu whose team has been managing SARS cases at the Prince of Wales Hospital in Hong Kong for the past few weeks. He offers some precautions in the event—may God forbid—that SARS gets to our country:

- Always wear a well-fitted mask in escalators, buses, trains, offices, restaurants and shopping malls. Don't go to cinemas. Push the button in the lift using your key to avoid any direct contact with your bare hand. If you can tolerate a latex glove, wear it.
- Don't touch your mask, it traps a lot of droplets.
- All surfaces within a distance of five feet from a patient are highly infectious because of droplets. Wash your hands frequently. Don't rub your eyes, touch your nose or mouth before washing hands.
- Clean the door handles, furniture and floor with diluted (1 in 100) bleaching detergent. Dettol is not useful. Wash your clothes immediately after going home.
- A patient is highly infectious 2-3 days even before developing illness. Consider high-risk individuals potentially infectious even if they look healthy.

It looks like the SARS scare is going to be around for a while. And when everyone thought that it would already be safe to travel, it just might strike back again.

Well, knowing how virulent and infectious the SARS virus is, it's understandable that even doctors like myself are starting to get paranoid about it. After looking at all the SARS files and pictures of patients, I almost wore a face mask and a pair of latex gloves while I typed this article.

The healing poison

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

FOR THE PAST 10 years, doctors have treated patients suffering from migraines, facial tics, back pain and the after effects of stroke the same way, and patients have responded well to the treatment. Now they're adding cerebral palsy to that eclectic yet highly desirable list.

The name of the wonder treatment?

Botox, better known the world over as the wrinkle-erasing, sweat-reducing, celebrity favorite.

Surprised? I admit I didn't expect to see migraines on the list because I'd read a few other theories as to what causes them. But the other conditions do make sense.

At any rate, Botox works the same way for all of them: by blocking the signals sent to the nerves by the muscles. Without these instructions, muscles are paralyzed and stay relaxed for a prolonged period instead of contracting and causing pain and pain lines for all involved.

Key to treatment

Relaxed muscles are key to treating cerebral palsy, which is an umbrella term for conditions characterized by the inability to control one's muscles as evidenced by jerky or spastic movements. It's the result of the brain's inability to coordinate messages sent to the muscles with the desired resulting action, although the cause of the brain's malfunctioning, be it from premature birth, a lack of oxygen, etc., remains a mystery. Just over two out of every 1,000 people in the world are diagnosed as having cerebral palsy, and there is no cure for it.

For several years now, researchers worldwide have been treating small groups of patients with Botox. All papers published about these studies have shown that children who receive these injections demonstrate a marked improvement in their ability to control their muscles within three months from the start of treatment. Yet the studies didn't receive very much attention, perhaps partly because there weren't enough patients involved.

And then Dr. Marc DiFazio of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., presented the results of his study at the American Academy of Neurology's conference in Hawaii (ever notice how all these major conferences are held in great travel destinations?) during the first week of April.

Study on children

Unlike previous studies, Dr. DiFazio and his colleagues looked at a total of 250 children aged between 1 and 16 years for two years. The patients were videotaped and their doctors and parents filled up evaluation forms to better follow the children's progress. Although all children were given Botox injections, only 206 of them kept coming back. In the end, 148 children with an average age of 2 years became the focal point of the study.

Dr. DiFazio was delighted to report in Hawaii that the prolonged Botox treatments had positively affected nearly 90 percent of the patients involved in the study. They could stand longer, were able to control their own movements for the first time, could feed themselves, and even hold a pen.

For some patients, the effects of the injections wore on longer than the expected four-month efficacy period. He also noted that five of the patients treated suffered side effects such as flu-like symptoms (not SARS though despite all the furor or we'd have heard of them by now) and weakened legs. In conclusion though, his study didn't prove anything other doctors had known for years: that Botox may not work for everyone with cerebral palsy, but it does make a fairly dramatic difference in the lives of those who respond to it.

Secret to Botox

The secret to Botox's efficacy is, of course, the botulinum toxin type A from which it is purified and diluted. What may not be common knowledge however is that there are seven types of botulinum toxin (types A-G), four types of which affect humans. Botulinum toxin types C, D and G affect animals. Despite studies showing that botulinum toxin types A, B, C, E and F have therapeutic benefits, I suspect the reason only type A is on the market at the moment is that the effects last much longer than the others do.

Considering all the good Botox seems to be doing for various segments of society, it still bears noting that the botulism toxin from which it is derived is considered a chemical weapon.

A minute amount of the substance (one source says a gram which is equivalent to the weight of a paper clip, although last time I checked, a paper clip weighed much less) is strong enough to kill over a million people.

Iraq is supposed to have large quantities of the toxin stored away. One can only hope they will be found and disposed of safely during the ongoing war.

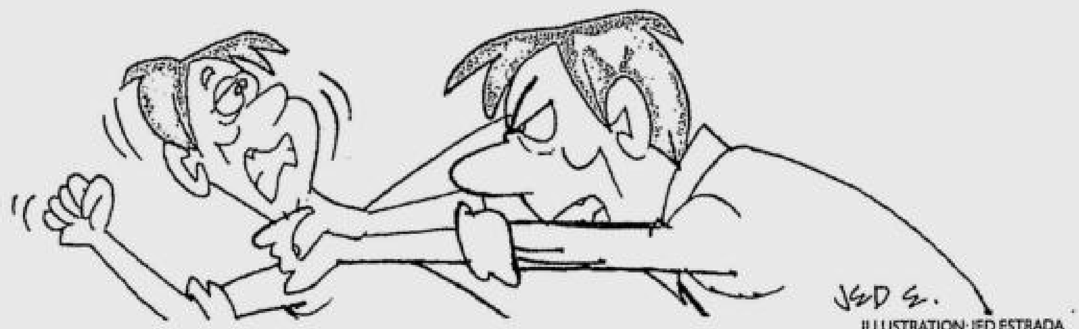


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

No to human clones!

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

THE RECENT death of the first cloned sheep, Dolly, and the so-called claims about human cloning success, raise once more the viability of cloning—this time not only on the ethics of the issue, but also on the science of the technology as a whole. What is the science behind cloning? What is the stand of the Philippines on this issue?

The National Academy of Science and Technology, the highest advisory body in the land, held a roundtable discussion last month on the topic "Human Genome: Promises and Problems." Several experts spoke on different aspects. They include Dr. Eva Maria Cutiongco of the Institute of Human Genetics, National Institutes of Health, UP Manila; Dr. Celia Torres-Villanueva of the National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, UP Diliman; Dr. Cora de Ungria of the DNA Analysis Laboratory, Natural Sciences Research Institute; Dr. Edna Monzon of the Department of Bioethics., UST; and Dr. Mariluz P. Mojica-Henshaw of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, UP Manila.

Let us focus on Dr. Mojica-Henshaw's report. The "production of genetically identical organisms," cloning (especially human cloning) can be either reproductive or therapeutic. They differ primarily on their goal—the former aims to create a newborn baby, and the latter pertains to stem cell research. Here the stem cells are removed from an embryo, cord blood, bone marrow and so forth to "produce healthy tissue or organs for transplant into sick people." Proponents of stem cell research argue that the health benefits of this technique (gene therapy, reduction of immune system rejection, etc.) are immeasurable.

3 methods

There are currently three ways to clone mammals: splitting off a cell from an embryo (twinning), the Roslin technique (used to clone Dolly) and the Honolulu technique (used to produce generations of mice). The specifics are too detailed to explain here (and interested readers can always refer to science Internet sites), but suffice it to say that the most efficient is the Honolulu technique. But this is not perfect. According to Dr. Mojica-Henshaw, "for every 100 blastocyts transferred, five to 18 fetuses form and two to three live mice are born." The Roslin technique is even less safe.

The NAST concurs: "Scientific data on the reproductive cloning of animals demonstrate that the procedure is far from perfect. Many clones die; only a small percentage of clones—about one to 5 percent for sheep and pigs—come to term. Abnormalities such as swollen placentas, enlarged hearts and defective kidneys have been observed in cloned mammalian fetuses.

"Coming up with implantable cloned embryos is also very difficult. Cloning Dolly the sheep was successful only after failures with 276 eggs. At the age of 5, Dolly was diagnosed to suffer from arthritis indicating premature aging, and at 6, she was recently put down due to a progressive lung disease."

Despite all the risks, why is animal cloning done? Well, it can help produce superior livestock (through breeding) and useful drugs (vaccines, for instance). It can also preserve endangered species.

What about human cloning? Here the issues are murkier, and here finally is the official stand of the NAST on human reproductive cloning:

"In 1997, the Vatican, through its Pontifical Academy for Life, called for a worldwide ban on human cloning, citing anthropological and theological principles—that human cloning opposes the dignity of human procreation and of the conjugal union and it could result in the perversion of fundamental relation-

NO TO/ B7

Large potential seen for herbal medicines

By Tessa R. Salazar

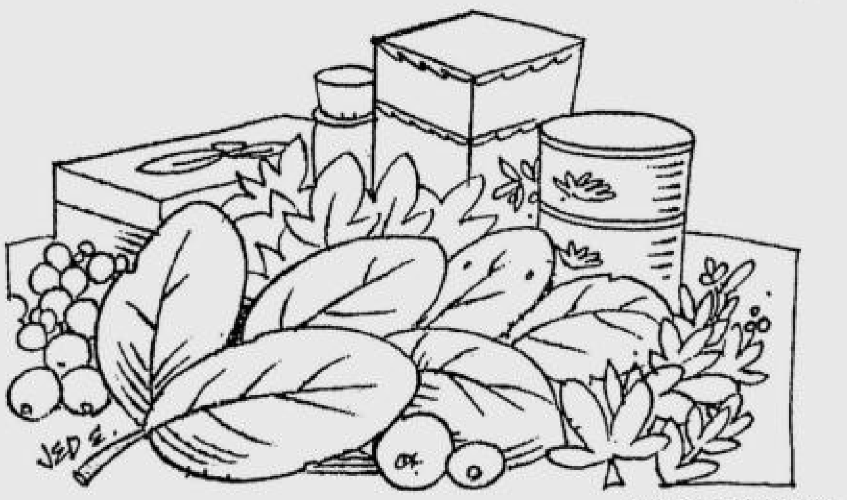


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

A GERMAN scientist, who discovered a cure for his asthma almost 10 years ago in the Philippines using the herbal plant *lagundi* and found a cure for his kidney stones using *sambong*, said Philippine plants and herbs have huge health benefits and economic potential.

Dr. Rummel Dietmar also predicted that local herbal medicine production will increase more than 500 percent in the next five years.

"It may even be (as high as) 1,000 percent because (of the low production levels) right now," said Dietmar, a consultant of the Department of Trade and Industry's Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem).

He said the herbal industry's annual production in Germany is $3.5 billion, Thailand has $50 million and Malaysia has $900 million. In the Philippines, it is less than $10 million annually.

"Filipinos are not used to the idea of regularly using Philippine plants. They don't know the incredible potential of local medicinal plants," Dietmar said.

The Department of Health's Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (Pitahc) has herbal processing plants in Cagayan Valley, Tacloban, Davao and Cotabato. Among the plants they process are *lagundi*, *sambong*, *tsaang gubat*, *yerbabuena*, *ampalaya*, garlic, guava leaves, *ulasimang bato*, and *niyog-niyogan*.

Pitahc offers training on traditional and alternative health care modalities like herbal medicine, massage therapy and acupuncture.

More sunshine

Dietmar has developed more than 40 products from Philippine plants, including memory enhancers, hypoglycemics, antitussive, female and male tonics and lifestyle products. He also developed herbal medicine for drug companies and conducted studies on an Abs herbal product endorsed by singer Gary Valenciano, a diabetic.

"When I came here 10 years ago, I had asthma. I came to know *lagundi*. Later I developed kidney stones and learned about *sambong*. These plants acted in a way I had never known in Germany," Dietmar said.

"Their effectiveness has an explanation. We have much more sunshine here; thus photosynthesis in the plant is much more intense than in Europe, where plants have only four to six months to mature. Here, there is sunshine even during the rainy season."

Dietmar lamented that herbal medicine is not being taught in Philippine medical schools. In Germany, special schools teach herbal medicine homeopathy.

Phythotherapy

The term "herbal medicine," however, is a misnomer. The technical term for herbal therapy is pythotherapy.

But strict quality standards on herbal products have to be met for pythotherapy to be acceptable.

"We talked about it with the Bureau of Food and Drug. It's a concern that is very hard to address. (For now), we have to trust manufacturers to conduct their quality controls very carefully," he said.

Some of the books Dietmar has authored are "Use and Prescription of Philippine Medicinal Plants for Primary Health Care: An Introduction to Phytochemistry"; "Selected Useful Plants of the Philippines: An Introduction to Economic Botany-Pharmacognosy-Phytopharmacology" and "Cosmetic Uses of Philippine Medicinal Herbs Economic Success with Philippine Plants and Crops."

Tooth decay in young children linked to secondhand cigarette smoke

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

CHICAGO—When it comes to childhood caries, it could be secondhand smoke and not the sugar monster that is landing young children in the dentist's chair, a study released recently said.

US researchers investigating the reason for relatively high rates of tooth decay among children in low-income families found a significant association between cavities in primary, or "baby teeth," and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke.

Baby teeth are normally pushed out by permanent teeth, which have a harder enamel surface, at around the age of 5 or 6 years.

In a study of 3,500 children between the ages of 4 and 12, one-third had at least one filling, while a quarter had at least one unfilled decayed tooth surface.

Slightly more than half (53 percent) had high blood levels of cotinine, a by-product of nicotine—a marker that correlated strongly with the children who had tooth decay.

The findings "provide one more piece of evidence indicating that passive smoking is harmful and that all children should be allowed to grow up in a smoke-free environment," the authors wrote in the study that appeared in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The University of Rochester researchers, who based their analysis on a national study conducted in 1988-1994, did not find the same link between passive smoking and decay in permanent teeth.

They speculated that secondhand smoke might promote tooth decay in children's first set of teeth by reducing their immunity and/or contributing to dry mouth which interferes with the beneficial properties of saliva.

Tooth decay among young children has declined dramatically in many developed countries thanks to fluoridated water and toothpastes. But many young children living in poverty are still susceptible to the oral infectious disease, according to the study.

AFP

ASK THE DENTIST

Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Signs of oral cancer

HOW can I check myself for oral cancer? What are its signs?

Ruel T.

You can do your own mouth check followed by a visual exam by your dentist. Typical signs of oral cancer include a wound that never heals and a lump in the mouth, tongue or throat. There is also a white or red patch that doesn't go away. Other signs are difficulty in chewing, swallowing and moving your tongue and jaw.

Always consult your dentist when something doesn't feel right. Your chances of recovery are better if the disease is treated early.

(The author is a general and cosmetic dentist licensed here and in the United States. E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

No to human clones. . .

From page B6

ships of humanity."

The NAST continues, "Considering the scientific evidence which shows the serious risks that procedures of human reproductive cloning may bring about to the donor of eggs, the surrogate mother, and to the resulting fetus and newborn; and considering the ethical, psychological, sociological and theological concerns, we lead the science community in supporting the ban on research on cloning human beings and reaffirm the DOST stand of 1997 on nonsupport for any research on human reproductive cloning."

As for therapeutic cloning, this is also controversial. Hopefully the NAST will come up with a policy statement about this in the near future.

For more information on this issue, contact the NAST at the DOST complex in Bicutan, Taguig (838-7739 or 66 or 92 or e-mail nast@mozcom.com).

AN INCURABLE VIRUS IS IN MOTION. *How strong is your Immune System?*

By: Dr. Rafael Sabando

AN INCURABLE VIRUS IS IN MOTION. ANYONE CAN BE AFFLICTED. That is a fact. Since there is nothing else yet to treat this, we are to rely largely on our immune system.

Our immune system is like an army that fights-off disease-causing microorganism. It works 24 hours a day, engulfing and digesting not only foreign particles but also damaged and aged cells. For as long as we live, the immune system does not stop. Sadly, however, it gets weak. With the modern way of living - unhealthy diet, insufficient sleep, and unbearable work stress - our immune system gets deteriorated gradually. And this is something that we cannot allow to go on; otherwise this will result in all sorts of diseases, ranging from the simple scratch of razor to the innumerable infections that appear to be abound these days.

The truth is, the hazards alone brought about by our present environment are far more than enough to ruin our immune system. On this concern, pollution is taking the lead. The toxic substances caused by the smog may trigger the onset of respiratory problems and heart disease. Dampened waste materials, on the other hand, may contaminate our food and water, thereby propelling diarrhea, amoebiasis, hepatitis and headache.

Surely, you can practice as much discipline as you like to perform your daily exercise and to follow that strict nutrition regimen. But how can you avoid talking to a chain smoker who happens to be your employer or your brother? The point is there are agents around you that, in one way or another, make you ill.

The incurable virus that threatens our life at the moment is only one of the seemingly infinite infectious diseases. Every day our immune system battles against sore throat, sinusitis, colds, pimples, eye irritations, UTI, cough, bronchitis, angina and many more.

The immune system, once it collapses, will actually invite all varieties of ailments. Therefore, the care for our immune system is a necessity. One way to do so is to take proper food supplements to compensate the nutrients that we often miss.

With proper food supplements, you can help back up the small armies within you. You can help them survive in their daily but hardly visible foes. Remember that the victory of your immune system is your victory too. •

BEE PROPOLIS - NATURE'S MOST POWERFUL ANTIBIOTIC

Bee Propolis is a major breakthrough in the quest for an all-natural food supplement that helps battle the ravages of virus.

Carlson Wade in his book, Propolis: Nature's Energizer, wrote, "To understand how propolis can be a natural antibiotic, note the following: if a rodent enters the hive and is stung to death, it remains in the hive since bees cannot move the foreign intruder. To prevent decay, the bees encase the rodent in propolis, then wrap beeswax around the entire mass. Thus embalmed, the rodent body remains intact without decay or decomposition for at least 5 years. The same principle is studied by scientists as a means of immobilizing infectious bacteria and viruses. In the human organism, the propolis- wrapped virus can be destroyed and eliminated. Unlike man-made antibiotics, propolis is always effective because bacteria and viruses cannot build tolerance against it."

Propolis is a very important preventive supplement that works safely and naturally to strengthen our immune system. It has no toxic side effects, no contraindications and no upper limits of ingestion.

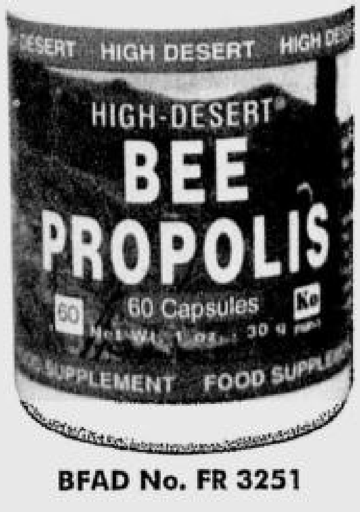
Danish naturalist and medical writer Dr. K.Lund Aagaard, M.D., wrote in his paper entitled Propolis, Natural Substance, the Way to Health, "The field of influence of propolis is extremely broad. It includes cancer, infection of the urinary tract, swelling of the throat, gout, open wounds, sinus congestion, colds, influenza, bronchitis, gastritis, diseases of the ears, periodontal disease, intestinal infections, ulcers, eczema eruptions, pneumonia, arthritis, lung disease, bile infections, circulation deficiencies, warts, conjunctivitis and hoarseness.

"Propolis may be used by everyone, sick or healthy, as a means of protection against microorganisms. Propolis is also efficient against conditions caused by bacteria, viruses or different fungi."

Propolis power may well be attributed to its rich concentration of bioflavonoids. Bioflavonoids generally are plant pigments, they provide a wide variety of important nutritional benefits.

What To Look For In Bee Propolis?

1. Flavonoid content. Flavonoid is the most important ingredient in propolis. The higher its content, the more effective the propolis is. High-Desert has gone to great lengths to obtain raw propolis with consistently high flavonoid content.
2. State-of-the-art Processing method. Most of the propolis extracts in the market have been processed under high temperature and inferior processing methods. More than 60% of the active ingredients may have experienced severe deterioration. In High-Desert, extraction of raw propolis is carried out in low temperature and a proprietary process which is able to effectively remove all foreign matter and impurities while at the same time preserving the bioactivity of the propolis, its flavonoids and other important nutrients.



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Honda's 2003 Civic gets even more exciting

HONDA Cars Phils. Inc. announces the release of the 2003 Civic, now with even more eye-catching sporty styling and class-leading innovative features. The new Civic comes with a newly designed front bumper and grille; a matching chrome moulding; and multi-reflector Euro-style tail lights that adds to its distinguished styling that is uniquely Honda. What's more, all variants now come with the exclusive "wave key", a difficult-to-copy key for that added safety and security.

The '03 Civic is available in 1.5 LXi MT or AT, 1.6 VTi MT or AT and 1.6 VTi-S MT or AT. New and exciting colors for the '03 Civic are Red Rock Pearl, Silverstone Metallic and Aqua Green, in addition to the popular Dark Emerald Green, Tafetta White and Zircon Blue. Exclusive colors include Circuit Blue for the 1.6 VTi and Night Hawk Black for the VTi-S.

In the heart of the '03 Civic VTi/VTi-S is the revolutionary Honda VTEC Technology. Balanced power and superior performance with excellent fuel efficiency is made possible with the Civic's 3-stage VTEC (VTEC3) engine. Capable of producing 130ps of power at 6,600rpm and a more stable torque output at 2000 - 5000rpm, the Civic's powerplant offers a spirited driving response while achieving minimum levels of fuel consumption.

Safety measures remain advanced in the '03 Civic. Honda's G-CON (G-force Control) impact-absorption technology, which effectively reduces potential injuries not only to the driver and passengers, but to pedestrians as well, is imbedded in all variants. Seatbelts with pretensioners are standard features in the VTi/ VTi-S variants of the '03 Civic. Supplemental features includes a dual SRS Airbags and ABS with electronic brakeforce distribution in the VTi-S variants.

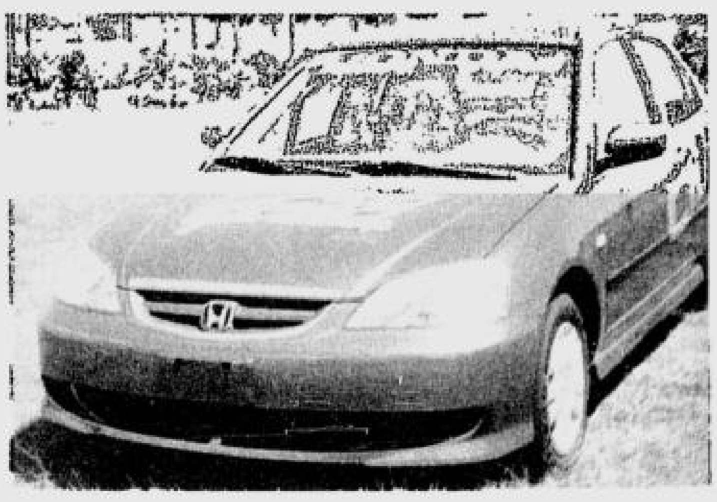
On top of all the 'class-above' features of the Civic, is the value it holds for owners. Maintenance costs are effectively reduced to half with its extended warranty of up to three years of 100,000 kilometers. Oil and lubrication change has been extended to 10,000 kilometers.

Launched early in 2001, the award-winning 7th generation Civic broke ground in the Philippine market with its revolutionary flat rear flooring, expanding cabin space. This followed global Honda's concept of "man maximum, machine minimum." The concept is based on maximizing interior space and comfort for the driver and passengers while maintaining a compact exterior.

The Civic heritage spans for almost three decades and continues to be a best-selling car that epitomizes Honda's innovative design. In the Philippines alone, 79,248 units have been sold since its introduction in 1992. This is a testament to Honda's commitment and dedication in providing only the best quality products to Filipinos.

Catch the exciting Civic at all Honda dealers showrooms nationwide. For more details, log on to www.hondaphil.com.

New Media Challenge opens exciting 2003 season



A MORE challenging year awaits Media Challenge participants as the new 2003 Civic becomes the official vehicle for its 6th season. The sportier and more stylish 2003 Civic will be driven journalists in both dirt and tarmac courses, demonstrating its prowess in the motorsports arena.

Presented by Honda Cars Philippines Inc., the new 2003 Civic features a new sleek and sportier look with its newly designed front bumper and grille with chrome mouldings and multi-reflector Euro-Style tail with lights that adds to its distinguished styling that is uniquely Honda. All this comes with class-leading features and innovations the Civic is known for.

There are fourteen teams who will be competing, representing various media outfits. Among the participants from broadcast media are: ABS-CBN News, Auto Review, Motoring Today, Auto Extreme, and the Associated Press for television; DZBB, DZMM, DZEC, DZRH and 103.5 K-Lite for radio. From the print media: Business World, Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Standard, Today, C! Magazine, and Sports Weekly will be participating. Meanwhile, the leading motoring websites participants are from Autoindustriya.com, Dragracingpinoy.com, Drive.com.ph, and Motioncars.com.

The 2003 Civic Media Challenge will be composed of 4 rounds, alternating on dirt and tarmac tracks. Competition rounds are scheduled on April 26, May 24, June 21 and July 19. The dirt track round will be held at the Liwasang Ipil-Ipil of the CCP Complex, while the tarmac track rounds are set for the Quirino Grandstand at the Rizal Park.

The 2003 Civic Media Challenge sponsors include Caltex Havoline, Michelin Tires, Nodalo's Trading, and Aitech.

With ten-time National Rally Driver of the Year, Vip Isada as the race director, the Civic Media Challenge is organized by ADBM Resources, in partnership with Activity Asia Association and Roadwise Motoring School.

TMPF HOLDS OUTREACH
Photos shows one of the beneficiaries of the recently concluded Toyota Medico-Dental Outreach. Angelito Villanueva, Toyota Motor Philippines Foundation (TMPF) president reported that over 1,500 indigent patients from Barangay Pulong Santa Cruz in Sta. Rosa, Laguna received free medico-dental services during the one-day 29th Toyota Foundation Medical Outreach. Primary, secondary and surgical medical and dental services were rendered by volunteer doctors, nurses and medical technicians from the Makati Medical Center, Manila Doctors Hospital, Manila Doctors College and the Makati Dental Society; while free medicines and refreshments were provided by Drugmakers Biotech Research Laboratories Inc., and Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines.

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Best of all, Hitachi products are made from durable materials, ensuring strength, comfort and efficiency that will last a long time. So if you want to live a good life, live your life with Hitachi - Japan's #1 in technology.

GIORDANO PHILIPPINE TEAM HOSTS 13TH GM CONFERENCE
The 13th Giordano GM Conference was hosted by the Giordano Philippine Team last Feb. 26 to March 1 at the Mactan Shangri-La, Cebu. This was attended by more than 90 delegates composed of general managers, buying managers and other support staff from Giordano Hongkong, Singapore, Taiwan, Middle East, Malaysia, Australia, Aruba, China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia. The 13th number was not an unlucky number after all as Giordano Philippines won the 'Market of the Year for 2002' award besting all other Giordano markets. This was based on a sales growth amidst the economic crisis and floor area efficiency compared to year 2001 performance. Shown in the picture from left: from the Giordano Philippine Team are Mikko Yuson, Jason Aquino, Willy Hao, Joyce Sia (operations manager), Marites See-Lazaro (assistant operations manager), Mr Peter Lau (CEO, Giordano Limited Int'l), Larry Lim (president and general manager), Tim Tan, Dennis Encarnado, Jovic Oruga and Alvin Balisbis.

Clips

Photo workshops

IN ITS quest to raise people's appreciation for photographic arts and to provide the venue to upgrade photographic skills of practitioners, the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation is holding workshops on basic photography and advanced photography workshops for four consecutive Sundays. The next basic and advanced workshops will be on April 20 to May 11 at the Yslas Restaurante, Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. Sponsors are YKL Development and Trading Corp. and Intramuros Administration. Among the topics in the basic course are camera handling, composition, basic lighting, basic portraiture and use of reflectors and available light. Lecturers are veteran photo educators Vic Sison, Ador Pamintuan, professor Cecilia Angeles, Ed Santiago and Tony Raval. To register, call Beverly Estrosas at 843-5341 or 813-7420.

Hobbies festival

SUMMER fun, healthy lifestyle and outdoor adventures for all ages are the main themes of this year's "Ready, Set...Go!", a sports and hobbies festival ongoing until April 15 at the Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang. In cooperation with Lipton Ice Tea, "Ready, Set...Go!" features an array of sports competitions, a Muntinlupa-wide MTB fun race (Chains on Terrains), an exhibit of the latest sports apparel, equipment and gadgets, healthy lifestyle demonstrations and other recreational activities. For more information, call the customer service at 850-3514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com. Festival Supermall is the largest shopping, dining and entertainment complex in southern Metro Manila with over 400 specialty stores and restaurants.

Free lecture on love

INNER Space Manila, of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), is conducting a free lecture on a different kind of love-spiritual love and healthy self-love for the soul and for fellow souls-to be held at the Inner Space Manila Meditation Center (521-2015, 524-3489) at the 3rd Floor, CDC Building, 1195 Maria Orosa Street, Ermita, Manila on Monday, April 21 at 5 p.m. The lecture, titled "Love Without Strings Attached", will discuss love on an elevated level-love on a higher plane that brings no sorrow and pain to the self, brings a lot of bliss and intoxication for the soul, and gives blessings of joy and happiness that lingers and lasts, promising "ecstatic pleasure without limits". The lecture, free for the public, is part of the continuing free community service of BKWSU.

MAYBANKALINGA: TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD
Maybank Philippines' first donation drive, MaybanKalinga, coined from Maybank and Kalinga was officially launched last December 2002. MaybanKalinga continues the tradition of the Maybank group's involvement in bringing cheer to less fortunate children and participating in social welfare projects; and along the parent bank's activities in Malaysia. Maybank Philippines' officers and staff who participated in the drive gathered used clothes, toys, books, groceries, toiletries and even cash. These donations were then sorted and formally handed over to Caritas Manila, the chosen beneficiary of the drive. The simple turnover ceremony, recently held at the Caritas Manila, was attended by representatives of Caritas Manila, their scholars and parents, along with Maybank Philippines president and CEO Lim Hong Tat; HRD head Doogie Justiniano, the project coordinator; and members of the MaybanKalinga organizing committee. Ms Tessie Gomez, special programs manager of Caritas, accorded the response to Maybank, in behalf of Caritas Manila.

ProductFILES

The perfect barbecue made easy

THINKING barbecue? Think Mama Sita's Barbecue Marinade.

Preparing the perfect barbecue concoction has never been easier and less time-consuming. All you have to do is marinate the chicken, pork, lamb, fish or seafood with Mama Sita's Barbecue Marinade for a minimum of three hours, turning occasionally to distribute the marinade evenly, then skewer the cutlets and they are ready for grilling.

To complement the taste, add Mama Sita's Java Sauce as a dip and, presto, you have the perfect barbecue.

Manufactured by Marigold Commodities Corp. (MCC), Mama Sita's Barbecue Marinade is a versatile sauce that can be used for countless other recipes such as stews, noodles, rolls, vegetables, even salads. On the other hand, Mama Sita's Java Sauce is a thick all-around sauce with peanut taste, naturally brewed soy sauce, cane sugar and wheat flour that go well with any fried or steamed food.

For more of Mama Sita's product lines, visit its website at http://www.msita.com.

G7 chiefs to discuss rebuilding Iraq economy

WASHINGTON—Group of Seven powers will discuss rebuilding Iraq's postwar economy and dealing with its massive debt this weekend, US Treasury Secretary John Snow said Thursday.

Snow said he expected "substantive discussions" with the G7 finance ministers and central bankers, and with the 124-nation International Monetary Fund and World Bank, about how to help the Iraqi recovery.

"It is important to recognize there that it is not simply recovering from 25 days of conflict but rather the task ahead is recovering from 25 years of economic misrule and mismanagement," Snow told a news conference.

Snow is to dine Friday and meet formally Saturday morning with his colleagues from the G7 nations—Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan. Russia will join part of the talks.

He then joins meetings of the IMF and World Bank over the rest of the weekend.

US President George W. Bush had emphasized that international institutions would have a vital role to play in the reconstruction of Iraq after the war, Snow said.

He urged the World Bank, the IMF and other institutions to offer their expertise and technical assistance as soon as possible.

World Bank president James Wolfensohn told a news conference earlier that he would ask his board of governors for approval before seeking an appraisal of Iraq's needs.

Snow said he was puzzled by that position.

"I hope he re-thinks that because I think the World Bank today should be getting involved," he said.

The US treasury secretary said the World Bank was an expert in assessing reconstruction needs.

Experts said the Iraqi debt could amount to more than $100 billion. Combined with claims from the Gulf War and debts on contracts, the number might swell to more than $300 billion. *AFP*

US economy showing no real signs of revival

WASHINGTON—The limping economy is showing no meaningful signs of revival, the latest batch of reports suggests.

Shoppers were tightfisted in March, based on disappointing sales figures reported by the nation's largest retailers. New claims for unemployment benefits fell last week, but are still at a high level, pointing to a sluggish job market.

And, the US trade deficit, while narrowing in February, was still the third highest on record.

"Overall, the economy has ended the first quarter on a weak note," said Lynn Reaser, chief economist at Banc of America Capital Management. "Businesses and consumers remain cautious."

Chief executive officers of major US companies, meanwhile, are largely glum about the economy's prospects in the months ahead, the Business Roundtable, a big business advocacy group said Thursday.

"CEOs identified their greatest economic challenges as consumer uncertainty resulting from the implications of war with Iraq and terrorism, and weak consumer demand," said John Dillon, chairman of the Business Roundtable and chairman and CEO of International Paper.

Even with signs that the war in Iraq may be winding down, Dillon said executives are still concerned about how long it will take for the economy to get back to full throttle. To help along the economic recovery, he urged Congress to enact President George W. Bush's tax-cut plan in its entirety.

With shoppers fixated on war news and worried about keeping their jobs during these muddled economic times, the nation's retailers reported Thursday that they suffered another month of disappointing sales in March. Unseasonably cold weather also hurt merchants by damping demand for spring clothes.

Separately, the Labor Department said that new claims for unemployment benefits fell last week by a seasonally adjusted 38,000 to 405,000.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average gained 23.39 points to close at 8,221.33.

In a third report, the Commerce Department said the trade deficit narrowed in February to $40.3 billion as prewar jitters crimped Americans' demand for foreign-made goods. Exports edged up.

However, even with the slight improvement in the trade deficit picture, February's trade gap marked the third biggest monthly deficit on record. *AP*

Nikkei dives to 20-yr low

SINGAPORE—Japanese stocks were hammered to a 20-year low on Friday but the dollar remained steady as investors, convinced that the war in Iraq had ceased to be a market factor, looked to US economic data and other pointers.

European markets were seen likely to open modestly higher, but analysts stressed that the fall in the Nikkei only reinforced the frailties of the world economy.

Foreigners and pension funds sold off Japanese blue-chips, pushing the Nikkei down over two percent to 7,807.99 points just before the close. That was the lowest the benchmark has been since 7,824.82 two decades ago.

Other Asian stock markets were mixed; oil inched higher in choppy trade and gold prices slipped.

The United States announced its trade balance and weekly jobless claims on Thursday and markets interpreted both numbers as positive, sending bond prices down but not really supporting the dollar.

The currency inched higher on Friday but dealers said it remained susceptible to bad news as attention focused on the University of Michigan consumer sentiment survey, due out later in the day, and a weekend Group of Seven meeting.

"The market is not ready to bet on a quick US recovery," said Yasunari Ueno, chief market economist at Mizuho Securities. "It will wait for US economic indicators and corporate earnings reports." The market moves during the day amply demonstrated that investors had firmly turned away from the war in Iraq, convinced that the conflict had run its course. But in its absence, skittishness prevailed.

"We have got a situation that investors are still very cautious as we turned our focus towards global economic conditions. This is not a market for heroes," said Michael Kendall, head of private client research at JB Were in Sydney.

"The balance of risks is still on the downside." The dollar stood at 119.71/74 yen , slightly higher than 119.59 yen in late New York trade.

"Under the current sentiment, the market is looking for reasons to sell the dollar, so it tends to pay more attention to bad data and bad news," said a dealer at a major Japanese bank.

On the Tokyo stock market, Toyota Motor Corp dropped 3.5 percent to a seven-year low as the Nikkei finally closed down 2.05 percent at 7,816.49. *Reuters*

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CAMARIN Cal City LA240m² FA104m 2Bdrms 1T&B P1.2M Vic/Gie 8903461 loc. 27

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4 Sale 5br PHOENIX Subd. Pasig 410sqm 636-7974 Rudy

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QUEZON CITY

4 Sale Adonis ACROPOLIS 5br 414sqm 636-7974 Rudy

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LAGUNA

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MARIKINA

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PROVIDENT VILL 280LA 4800/SQM TEL 9488240

MUNTINLUPA

SOUTH GREENHTS VILL 300m² fenced P3,833/m² Vic Gigie 8903461 loc 25/27

PARANAQUE

BF Pque Agana 397m² P6T
BF QC 450m² P8T/m²
call 9316390 or 09194628295

PASIG

METROVILLE SUBD LA333m P4,054/m Vic 8903461 loc 27

RIZAL

Antipolo 1.6M 737m² 7443465

KINGSVILLE ROYALE Antipolo 180LA 3500/SQM 948-8240

SAN JUAN

• N/E G-Hills!
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CAVITE

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LAGUNA

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P800/L3 9136710/4333682

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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NOTICE OF LOSS

Alabang Country Club Certificate No B-0269 issued to Regelia S. Pantaleon. (PDI-April 5, 12, 19, 2003)

PERSONAL

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- records of grades
- 2x2 or 1½ x 1½ ID picture

Our office is located at San Juan

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
OLD MIA ROAD, PASAY CITY,
METRO MANILA

IN RE: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE FUEL SURCHARGE OF US$10 FOR A ONE WAY TRIP JOURNEY AND US$20 FOR A ROUNDTRIP/CIRCLE TRIP JOURNEY FOR ALL WORLD WIDE TRAVEL

CAB CASE No. EP-22543

EMIRATES (EK),
Petitioner.
x - x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of RA 776, as amended, Notice is hereby given that EMIRATES (EK) has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a petition for approval of authority to impose fuel surcharge of US$10 for a one way trip journey and US$20 for a roundtrip/circle trip journey for all worldwide travel. The above-entitled case is scheduled for hearing on 29 April 2003 at 9:00 AM at the CAB Conference Room, Old MIA Road, Pasay City before the undersigned at which the applicant shall present relevant evidence.

The applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published at least once two (2) weeks before the scheduled hearing in a newspaper of general circulation.

Let a copy of the petition and this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

10 April 2003
Pasay City, Philippines

(Sgd.) JOCELYN VILLAR-ALTAMIRA
Hearing Officer

(PDI–April 12 & 19, 2003)

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teekay.recruitment@teekay.com

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SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 • 4214 • 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

April 9, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed items;

A. ITEMS TO BID

QTY	U/I	ITEMS DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET COST
1	LOT	SERVICES AND MATERIALS TO SUPPLY, LAY, COMPACT, CORRECT AND TEST OF BITUMINOUS CONCRETE SURFACE COURSE (ITEM 310)	P 3,111,382.82

B. Complete specification/technical description of the subject items to bid will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible suppliers/contractors.

C. Application Particulars for Eligibility is open to all Contractors with the following requirements:
  1. Article of Incorporation
  2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
  3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (If not Corporation)
  4. Valid Mayor's Permit
  5. BIR VAT Registration
  6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (stamped received by BIR or its duly accrouited/authorized banks, certified true copy)
  7. Company PROFILE
  8. PCAB License Category C, Small B
  9. List of related projects (past and present)
  10. List of Clients

D. Deadline for submission of Accomplished for Eligibility to bid: April 25, 2003, 5:00 p.m. at BAC Secretariat Office, PPMD, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

E. Time and date of Submission and opening of bids, Pre-Bid Conference shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies & Materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government

(Sgd.) ATTY. CHITO M. CRUZ
Chairman

(PDI - Apr 12 & 20 2003)

Trade and Investment Development Corporation of the Philippines
(Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency)

TRADE AND INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of the provision of consultancy and systems development services for an Internet-based trade information exchange (TRADEX) among Asian Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) and Export-Import Banks.
2. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is P 15,000,000.00;
3. Interested parties are required to secure the list of basic requirements for registration and eligibility at the following address:

   MIS Department
   Trade and Investment Development Corporation of the Philippines
   3/F Citibank Center, Citibank Plaza
   8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City 1226
4. Schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

   Submission of registration and eligibility requirements : 25 April 2003
   Pre-bid Conference : 28 April 2003
   Submission of Bids : 13 May 2003
5. Bidding documents are available at the address given above upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,500.00.
6. Applications for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by TIDCORP in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
7. TIDCORP reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids or request for registration without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. TIDCORP assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in connection with this bidding.
8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) PHILIP B. SAGUN
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--April 12 & 20, 2003)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The *National Housing Authority* is inviting *Offers to Purchase* by way of sealed bids the following commercial & industrial properties on *"As-Is-Where-Is"* basis:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	BASE PRICE/ SQ.METER
I. SECOND TENDER			
001-011	11 commercial lots, 201.5 to 322 sqm. With TCTs	Vista del Rio Subd. Brgy. Alimanao Penablanca, Cagayan	1,300.00 to 1,500.00
012-014	3 commercial lots, 304 & 506 sqm. With TCTs	Cancabato Ville Subd. Brgy. San Jose Tacloban City	1,300.00 to 1,400.00
II. FIRST TENDER			
015-021	7 industrial lots 9,658 to 10,811 sqm. With TCTs	San Jose Del Monte Bulacan	800.00

Payment schemes for the abovecited properties are *cash, modified cash* (6 equal installments without interest) and *installment* for a maximum period of *ten (10) years* with graduated interest rates.

Bidding Materials can be secured for a non-refundable fee of *PhP200.00* from the *Commercial/Industrial Bids & Awards Committee (COINBAC) c/o the Commercial & Industrial Estates Department (CIED)*, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City and Project Offices mentioned below. For inquiry, please call *Ms. Evelyn V. Ramos, Manager, Sales Div., CIED or Ms. Neri A. Subido* at the following Tel. Nos. *CIED: (02) 923-0390, (02) 928-4561 local 302 & 303.*

SCHEDULE:

		Cagayan	Sapang Palay	Tacloban
A	Submission of Pre-Qualification Requirements	April 21 to May 5, '03 until 5:00 p.m. NHA Reg. Off. II, Sunshine Valley Homes, Pengue-Ruyu, Tuguegarao	April 28 to May 9, '03 until 5:00 p.m. CIED, Mezzanine Floor, NHA Main Bldg. Elliptical Road, Q.C.	May 5 to May 21, '03 until 5:00 p.m. NHA-Leyte Proj. Off. Calnapawan Rd. Sagkahan Dist. Tacloban City
B	Pre-Bid Conference	May 7, '03 NHA Reg. Off. II 2:30 p.m.	May 13, '03 Operations Center 3rd Flr. NHA Bldg., Q.C., 10:00 a.m.	May 21, '03 NHA Leyte Proj. Off. 2:30 p.m.
C	Submission of Sealed Bids	May 9, '03 8 to 10 a.m. NHA Reg. Off. II	May 15, '03 8 to 12 noon Operations Center	May 23, '03 8 to 10 a.m. NHA Leyte Proj Off.
D	Opening of Sealed Bids	May 9, '03 10:30 a.m. NHA Reg. Off. II	May 15, '03 1:30 p.m. Operations Center	May 23, '03 10:30 a.m. NHA Leyte Proj. Off.

The Authority reserves the right to *reject* any or all offers or any part thereof or to *waive* any required formalities and *accept* offers most advantageous to the interest of NHA.

(Sgd.) JOSEPH PETER S. SISON
Assistant General Manager/
Chairman, COINBAC

(PDI - Apr 12 & 16 2003)

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With good communication and interpersonal skills
Hardworking, self-driven, flexible, not more than 28 years old

FINANCE

Must be a Certified Public Accountant
2-3 years finance related experience
Proficient in computer software applications
Trustworthy, resourceful, and attentive to details
Not more than 28 years old

HUMAN RESOURCES

Psychology, Industrial Engineering, or Behavioral Science graduate
5-7 years HR/Personnel experience in plant/manufacturing operations, with at least 3 years in managerial position
With recognized contributions in assigned HR/Personnel area/s
Strong interpersonal skills; good communication skills
28-33 years old

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERS

BS I.E. graduates
1-3 years focused experience in plant operations/business planning, or purchasing
Proficient in computer software applications
Analytical, well organized, and innovative
Not more than 28 years old

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College graduate
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Not more than 28 years old

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sbma
SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 • 4214 • 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

April 9, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed items;

A. Items **202 UNITS BRANDED DESKTOP COMPUTER SETS WITH ACCESSORIES**

B. Complete specification/technical description of the subject items to bid will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible suppliers/contractors.

C. Application Particulars for Eligibility is open to all Contractors with the following requirements:

1. Letter of Intent
2. Article of Incorporation
3. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
4. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (If not Corporation)
5. Valid Mayor's Permit
6. VAT Registration
7. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (certified true copy in sealed envelope)
8. Presence of Exclusive/Authorized/Sole Distributorship Agreement from the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM), document duly notarized at the point of origin
9. Company PROFILE
10. List of Products Carried
11. List of Clients

D. Deadline for submission of Accomplished for Eligibility to bid: **April 25, 2003, 5:00 p.m.**

E. Time and date of Submission and opening of bids, Pre-Bid Conference shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies & Materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CHITÓ M. CRUZ**
Chairman

(PDI - Apr. 12 & 20, 2003)

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER

East Avenue, Quezon City

The Philippine Heart Center, Division of Anesthesia is accepting applicants for Fellowship in Cardiovascular Anesthesia.

Applicants must be graduates of an accredited Anesthesia Residency Training Program.

For inquiries contact OER Tel. **925-2401** local **3234-3236** or Anesthesia office local **2267-2268.**

NHA presents in-city relocation sites

THE National Housing Authority (NHA) yesterday presented various in-city relocation sites as housing options for Caloocan City relocatees.

NHA general manager Edgardo D. Pamintuan said the agency has negotiated with Caloocan City land owners who have offered their properties as resettlement sites for some 597 informal settlers who are set to be displaced by the rehabilitation and modernization of the Philippine National Railways (PNR).

"Caloocan urban poor families have refused the government's off-site relocation program fearing that they will lose their only source of income, and be forced to move away from their livelihood and other needs," Pamintuan said.

Instead, he said, these families have requested that they be resettled within the city.

"Recognizing their request, NHA has identified other housing options for the city residents' preference and consideration," Pamintuan said.

Among the options available are Tala Medium Rise Housing Project (180 housing units generated), Miramonte Park in Brgy. 180 (200 lots generated), Philippine Veterans Bank Property in Camarin (300 lots generated) and Futuristic Property in Bagumbong.

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sbma
SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 • 4214 • 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

April 9, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed project;

A. Project : **ONE (1) LOT SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF INDOOR BASKETBALL COURT, ERECTION, INSTALLATION & PAINTING WORKS**

B. Services to be performed include:

Erection and Installation of Steel Columns and Tie Beams, Steel Rigid Frames and Fabricated Overhang Assembly, C-Purlins and Cross Bracings, Painting and installation of Roof Sheets for the construction of Indoor Basketball and Tennis Court located at Rizal Highway corner Manila Avenue, SBFZ. Contractor must provide Certified Welder Class A or Class B welded butt joints, horizontal, vertical and overhead welding, must be certified by the Testing Laboratory Company accredited by the Dept. of Public Works and Highway (DPWH). Detailed scope of work/services for the project will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible contractors.

C. Approved Budget Cost : **Php = One (1) Million Six Hundred Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Pesos and Fifty Seven Centavos (P1,600,560.57)**

D. Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all pre-qualified contractors/suppliers. Prospective bidders are required to submit a letter of intent and certified true copy of the following documents:

1. Article of Incorporation
2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (If not Corporation)
4. Valid Mayor's Permit
5. VAT Registration
6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (stamped by BIR or its duly accredited/authorized banks, certified true copy)
7. PCAB License Category C, Small B
8 Company PROFILE
9. List of Related Projects (Past/Present)
10. List of Clients

E. Deadline and submission of Application for Eligibility to bid: **April 25, 2003, 5:00 p.m.** at BAC Secretariat Office, PPMD, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

F Time and date of Submission and opening of bids, Pre-Bid Conference shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies & Materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CHITO M. CRUZ**
Chairman

(PDI - Apr. 12 & 20, 2003)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Public Bidding No. 03-010
May 08, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invies **G-EPS registered suppliers** to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Supply and Delivery of IT Equipment for the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP).**

The approved budget for this contract is **P3,763,633.00**.

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-procurement conference** that will be held on **April 22, 2003, 9:30 A.M., Tuesday**, at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **April 08, 2003** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and receipt of proposals shall be on **May 08, 2003 at 9:30 A.M., Thursday**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division at telephone nos. 561-60-98 or 563-94-02.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – April 5 & 12, 2003)

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SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 • 4214 • 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

April 9, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the public bidding of the below-listed project:

A. Project : **ONE (1) LOT SERVICES AND MATERIALS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OFF-SHORE APPROACH LIGHT BARRETTE STEEL PILES AT RUNWAY #07, SBIA, SBFZ.**

B. Services to be performed include:

Installation of proper scaffolding and platform. The method for the Installation and removal will be subject to approval of airport representative and authority to avoid any possible hazards in the working area. Scaffoldings and platforms will be removed upon completion of works. Removal of Foreign Object Debris present on piles and proper cleaning of surfaces prior to installation of reinforcing fabric cover material.Survey the piles to determine FOD's and most deteriorated part of piles prior to removal and surface cleaning. Collected FODs, waste and trash will be put and secured in plastic bags to be provided by the contractor. The supplier/contractor will supply and install the necessary materials for the services regardless of its volume required to complete the work on time and will be subjected to inspection and acceptance of SBIA administration. Detailed scope of work/services for the project will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible contractors.

C. Approved Budget Cost : **Php = One (1) Million Four Hundred Sixty Thousand Pesos (P1,460,000.00)**

D. Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all pre-qualified contractors/suppliers. Prospective bidders are required to submit a letter of intent and certified true copy of the following documents:

1. Article of Incorporation
2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not Corporation)
4. Valid Mayor's Permit
5. VAT Registration
6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (stamped by BIR or its duly accredited/authorized banks, certified true copy)
7. PCAB License Category C, Small B
8 Company PROFILE
9. List of Related Projects (Past/Present)
10. List of Clients

E. Deadline and submission of Application for Eligibility to bid: **April 25, 2003, 5:00 p.m.** at BAC Secretariat Office, PPMD, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

F. Time and date of Submission and opening of bids, Pre-Bid Conference shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies & Materials

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CHITO M. CRUZ**
Chairman

(PDI - Apr. 12 & 20, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites **G-EPS registered suppliers** to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF PILOT BOOTS for the Philippine Air Force (PAF).**

The approved budget for this contract is **P9,695,775.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **April 22, 2003, 1:30 p.m., Tuesday**, at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **April 8, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 1,500.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above-mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **May 8, 2003 at 1:30 p.m., Thursday.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02 or 563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI-April 5 & 12, 2003)

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103 years

Jovita A. Borja

wife of the late Col. Alejandro S. Borja P.A. (Ret.)

passed away in the Grace of the Lord
on 9 April 2003 at the age of 74

Her daughter **Josephine**; and son-in-law **Dr. Angelito Fernandez**; grandchildren **Jhonnna, Alexis, Janina, Adrian**; sisters **Susan** and **Lita**; brother **Eduardo**; in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be at La Funeraria Paz Crematory on 15 April 2003 at 1:00 p.m.

SIMON C. SANCHEZ

Has joined his Creator on April 9, 2003
at the age of 42.

His beloved wife **Jeanne Aytona Sanchez**; his father **Peping Sanchez**; stepmother **Edith**; his brothers and their wives **Manny** and **Adora**, **Danny** and **Marivic**, **Joey** and **Toy**; his brother **Edgar**; his sister **Carla** and his Aunt **Angie**; his mother-in-law **Ligaya Aytona** and his other in-laws **Clarence** and **Dorothy Aytona**, **Dennis** and **Mary Ann Aytona**, **Nadie Aytona**, **Liaza Aytona Eco**, **Manuel Aytona Jr.**; and his nephews and nieces request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Christ the King Chapel, Green Meadows, Quezon City.

Cremations services will be on Sunday, April 13, 2003, 6:00 p.m. at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City after the 4:00 p.m. Mass at Christ the King Church.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
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Tels. (0765) 522-3451; 522-2126; (0917) 434-9976
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Cebu; Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
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ANGELES MACAIRAN PALMA

Joined her Creator on April 8, 2003 at the age of 60.

Her loving husband GORGONIO JR., children JONATHAN and GINA, CHRISTINE and ARIEL, WINSTON and BONNA, ELGIN and MYLA and grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence, 653-A Timawa Avenue, Molo, Iloilo City.

Interment will be on Sunday, April 20, 2003 at Forest Lake Memorial Park, Mandurriao, Iloilo City at 3:00 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: March 28, 2003
LOAN NO.: MIYAZAWA
CONTRACT NO.: Sp00.SMSRTL.Lw.-0304

1. The *National Power Corporation (NPC)* has received a loan from the *Miyazawa Funds* in Japanese Yen currency, and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for *Furnishing, Delivery of Transmission Line Materials and Construction of San Manuel - San Roque 230kV DC/ST Transmission Line Project on Turn Key Basis.*
2. The *National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO)*, administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Furnishing, Delivery of Transmission Line Materials and Construction of San Manuel - San Roque 230kV DC/ST Transmission Line Project On Turnkey Basis (Sp00.SMSRTL.Lw-0304).
3. Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents at the *Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department, 2nd Floor, Building 2, National Transmission Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City (Zip Code 1104), Philippines, Tel. No.: 922-0401, Fax No.: 921-2308.*
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting **April 4, 2003** upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *ten thousand pesos (Php 10,000.00).*
5. A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2)-sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals are opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive are rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance to the specification. If the bidders deem necessary, he may submit a supplementary price proposal that only contain the changes in price resulting from the changes in the technical proposal. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of *Sixty Six Thousand and Two Hundred Fifty US Dollars ($66,250.00).* The bid security must be included with the technical proposal. The deadline for the submission bids will be on *June 4, 2003 at 1:30 p.m.* at the aforementioned address. Late submission will be rejected.
7. The technical proposals will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend.
8. The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
9. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all Bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN
Chairman
Bids Award Committee

(PDI - Apr 12 13 15 & 20 2003)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: March 28, 2003
LOAN NO.: MIYAZAWA
CONTRACT NO.: Sp02.CMIP.Vw-0358

1. The *National Power Corporation (NPC)* has received a loan from the *Miyazawa Funds* for *Cebu-Mactan Interconnection Project* and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract *Design, Furnishing, Installing, Testing and Commissioning (Turn-key Basis) GIS Substation Including Protection & Communication Systems and Underground Power & Fiber Optic Cables.*
2. The *National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO)* administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the:

   Schedule I - Design, Furnishing, Installing, Testing and Commissioning (Turn-key Basis) 138/69 kV GIS & Conventional Outdoor Substation Equipment Including Protection & Communication Systems for Mandaue S/S, Mactan S/S & Banilad S/S Expansion

   Schedule II - Design, Furnishing, Installing, Testing and Commissioning (Turn-key Basis) 138 kV Underground XLPE Power Cables & Fiber Optic Cables
3. Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents at the *Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department, 2nd Floor, Building 2, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City (Zip Code 1104), Philippines, Tel./Fax Number: 921-2308.*
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting March 28, 2003 upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *fifty-five thousand pesos (Php 55,000.00).*
5. A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2)-sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals are opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive are rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance. The bidders may or may not submit a supplementary price proposal, which contain the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in the technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of:

   Schedule I - Three Hundred Seventy Four Thousand Three Hundred Twenty US dollars (US$374,320)

   Schedule II - Two Hundred Sixty Thousand and Forty US dollars (US$260,040)

   The bid security must be included with the technical proposal.

   The deadline for the submission of bids will be on July 15, 2003 at 1:30 p.m. at the aforementioned address. Late submissions will be rejected.
7. The technical proposals together with the bid security will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend.
8. The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
9. The total contract duration for each schedule is 540 calendar days.
10. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all Bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN
Chairman
Bids Award Committee

(PDI - Apr 12 13 & 15 2003)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Contract : Sp02.DBTL.Le-0359 — Construction and Erection of Dasmariñas - Biñan 230 kV Steel Tower Double Circuit Transmission Line Project
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all construction plant, labor, materials, supplies, tools and equipment (except for materials and equipment specified to be furnished by TRANSCO), constructing complete the 230 kV Steel Tower Transmission Line Project.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid are as follows from Internal Cash Generation.

   Schedule I (Dasmariñas S/S to Tower No. DB-22) · P 48,732,381.00
   Schedule II (Tower No. DB-22 to Biñan S/S) · P 54,093,330.00
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino contractors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid/project with the following License and Registration Particulars as specified in the Eligibility Documents.

   For Schedule I:
   License Particular : at least Category AA - Specialty in Electrical Works
   Registration Particular : at least Large A - Electrical Works

   For Schedule II:
   License Particular : Category AAA - Specialty in Electrical Works
   Registration Particular : Large B - Electrical Works
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by Transco in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Eligibility Documents and Forms will be available for issuance on April 15, 2003 at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, Second Floor, Building No. 2, Power Center, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, Contractor's License and a payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per copy.
7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before May 14, 2003 and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
8. Contractor, not yet included in the Transco's List of Registered Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
     Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
     Taxpayer's Identification Number;
     Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation, including, in the case of procurement of civil works, non-inclusion in the "blacklist" of contractors issued by the CIAP.
     Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;
     Contractor's License.
9. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all Bids or request for registration without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. In view of the emergency nature of the Project, the Contractor may submit Application for Eligibility for two (2) schedules, however, the Contractor shall be allowed to participate only in either Schedule I or II, if evaluated eligible for two (2) schedules.
11. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN
Chairman Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - Apr 12 14 & 16 2003)

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Asia frets as threats to growth mount

SINGAPORE—The spread of SARS, the uncertainty of Iraq and the risk from North Korea all point to slowing growth in Asia this year, the latest Reuters Asian economic poll of over 100 economists showed yesterday.

Forecasts have been trimmed for most of Asia since a similar Reuters poll in January. The most notable revisions were in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea, where average forecasts were cut by at least 10 percent and as much as 30 percent.

"If things were not bad enough with the ongoing Iraq war and geopolitical risks from North Korea, we now have the SARS virus to contend with," said Sailesh Jha, a senior regional economist at the Development Bank of Singapore.

"All these event risks are causing a doom-and-gloom scenario for the economic outlook for the region, to the extent that recession fears are emerging again a la the Asian crisis."

China's growth is expected to stay strong and Thailand remains a bright spot in Asia. Forecasts for the Philippines and Indonesia have improved slightly as they weather domestic economic troubles better than many had expected.

But the rapid growth of 1999 and 2000, as a resurgent Asia bounced back from the 1997/98 financial crisis by riding the final stages of the global technology boom, is a fading memory.

Despite the current difficulties, economists throughout the region remain confident that things will improve next year.

Huge foreign exchange reserves, current account surpluses and fiscal and monetary policy flexibility also mean Asia is in a stronger position to cope with this downturn compared to 1997.

Every country polled in the Asia-Pacific region is expected to post stronger growth next year—apart from New Zealand, where economists see growth moderating to 2.6 percent from 2.9 percent.

With growth worries, inflation is not a regional concern—although countries such as South Korea will be keeping an eye on signs of rising prices—and if oil prices ease as the Iraq war draws to an end, price pressure will remain a non-issue.

Trade surpluses are generally expected to remain healthy in those countries that are running them, although they will probably be dented as global demand slows.

China's trade surplus is forecast to drop by over 25 percent to $22 billion in 2003. This would leave them less money to buy US dollar assets, buying which has helped limit Asian currencies' gains against the dollar in recent years.

The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome virus is the great unknown for Asia's economies. *Reuters*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo in a huddle with Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. chair emeritus Lucio Tan during the induction of the FFCCI's officers in Malacañang. EDWIN BACASMAS

ERC clears P0.0025/kwh hike for Napocor's watershed reservations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has approved yet another added charge of 0.25 centavo (P0.0025) per kilowatt-hour collected from all customers of the National Power Corp. for the management of watershed reservations.

In a 20-page decision dated April 2, the ERC said Napocor could draw up to P70 million from a special trust fund handled by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM).

The quasi-judicial body also ordered the National Transmission Corp. and distribution utilities to collect from end-consumers the added charge and remit this to PSALM.

Napocor originally asked for some P120 million for its watershed program, which would maintain the power firm's capability to support the generation of electricity from water-based power plants.

The firm's watershed reservations are currently plagued with, among others:

- Abusive land use practices such as shifting cultivation, upland farming and illegal forest product harvesting;
- Proliferation of squatters, illegal fish cages, resorts, quarrying activities and forest fires; and
- Uncontrolled conversion of land use and increasing population in the uplands.

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Insightful reflection, contingency planning, and positive thinking can prevent the fires of conflict from spreading

'Don't just do something; sit there!'

By Marge C. Enriquez

THERE comes a time in many people's lives when a sledgehammer forces them to halt and examine the values they abide by.

Whether through a misfortune, disease, emptiness or a loss of meaning, there rises a need to make a full personal reassessment.

Being intangible, values are not easy to take hold of and look at. In fact, the word "values" itself is not usually found in people's vocabularies. Yet, values invigorate our thoughts, shape our emotions and influence our actions. Thus the famous biblical quote, "Without vision, people perish."

You might add that without values, people will steal or kill. Or gossip, criticize and flaunt egos. Just read the papers or watch the news on television, and you'll find enough proof that if it's values we're looking at, the world is impoverished.

Values spell out what people naturally care about most. On one end of the spectrum, material objects determine our disposition in this consumerist world. This lower value set leads to amassing, greed and, eventually, conflict.

On the other end of the spectrum are virtues, or the natural qualities of the spirit–peace, love, purity, benevolence, respect, tolerance, cooperation, honesty, and so on.

Personal and collective crises are the result of neglecting the values within ourselves and our relationships as human beings. Only when the suffering becomes so intense do we stop to ask what went wrong and what needs to be done. By then, change could be very difficult to accomplish.

More from Mike

The past months have been marked by mass protests worldwide, on account of the Iraq war. Last Wednesday, it was the Iraqis' turn to vent their anger by dismantling Saddam's statues. These demonstrations have made us question the erosion of values and the need to heal hemorrhaging cultures.

London-based life coach **Mike George** once commented on the futility of rallying on the streets. He said: "In most 'developed' cultures today, the immediate reaction is, 'My God, don't just sit there, do something!' But that's like adding gasoline to fire."

He pointed out that for centuries, the response of spiritual cultures has been the opposite: "Don't just do something, sit there!" Insightful reflection, contingency planning and positive thinking can prevent the fires of conflict from spreading. The change happens by making a personal journey not by marching on the streets.

For many readers who enjoyed George's essay on "Vision," published last January, here's another inspirational piece, this time on the real meaning of courage.

Elan endeavors to report on the rich, of whom there are a few left, and the famous. The old rich spend their money wisely by contributing to the making of a better society. For example, the philanthropists who were recently bestowed the Liturgical Awards from the Order of Malta, made personal sacrifices to uplift the lives of the poor and needy. Best of all, they have eschewed publicity.

Some fashion sense

I sometimes wonder if the younger generation of Manila's elite could ever follow in the footsteps of their parents or grandparents who built churches, orphanages, contributed generously to the flourishing of the arts, and undertook projects aimed at comforting the sick and the needy.

It seems that the younger and middle-aged set from upper middle families dominate the society pages these days. But mostly they are photographed partying. Or if they do something charitable, a photographer is always in tow, for eventual information dispatches to media.

Teddy Montelibano's series on Bacolod's new elite recounts how these Negrenses, many of them bred in the United States, downshifted from life in the cosmopolitan fast lane to the simplicity of their hometown.

In our fashion pages (see Section D), Elan waxes nostalgic with the vintage clothes of **Azabache** which were fashion-forward 20 years ago, and look nothing less than classic today. **Harriet Ann Dy** profiles a garment manufacturer, tackling fashion the way it should be written–as an economic indicator. There is a clear distinction between hacks and journalists in fashion reportage. The former are glorified hawkers whose idea of "doing the readers good" stems from indoctrination by their sources in the arts of illusion and profit. At the expense of the public, naturally. Readers who have made Vogue and its ilk more sacred than any holy scripture think these hawkers are "angels."

The journalists' role should be more than just to inform or to entertain. They should be able to put things in a context that is relevant to the reader's lives.

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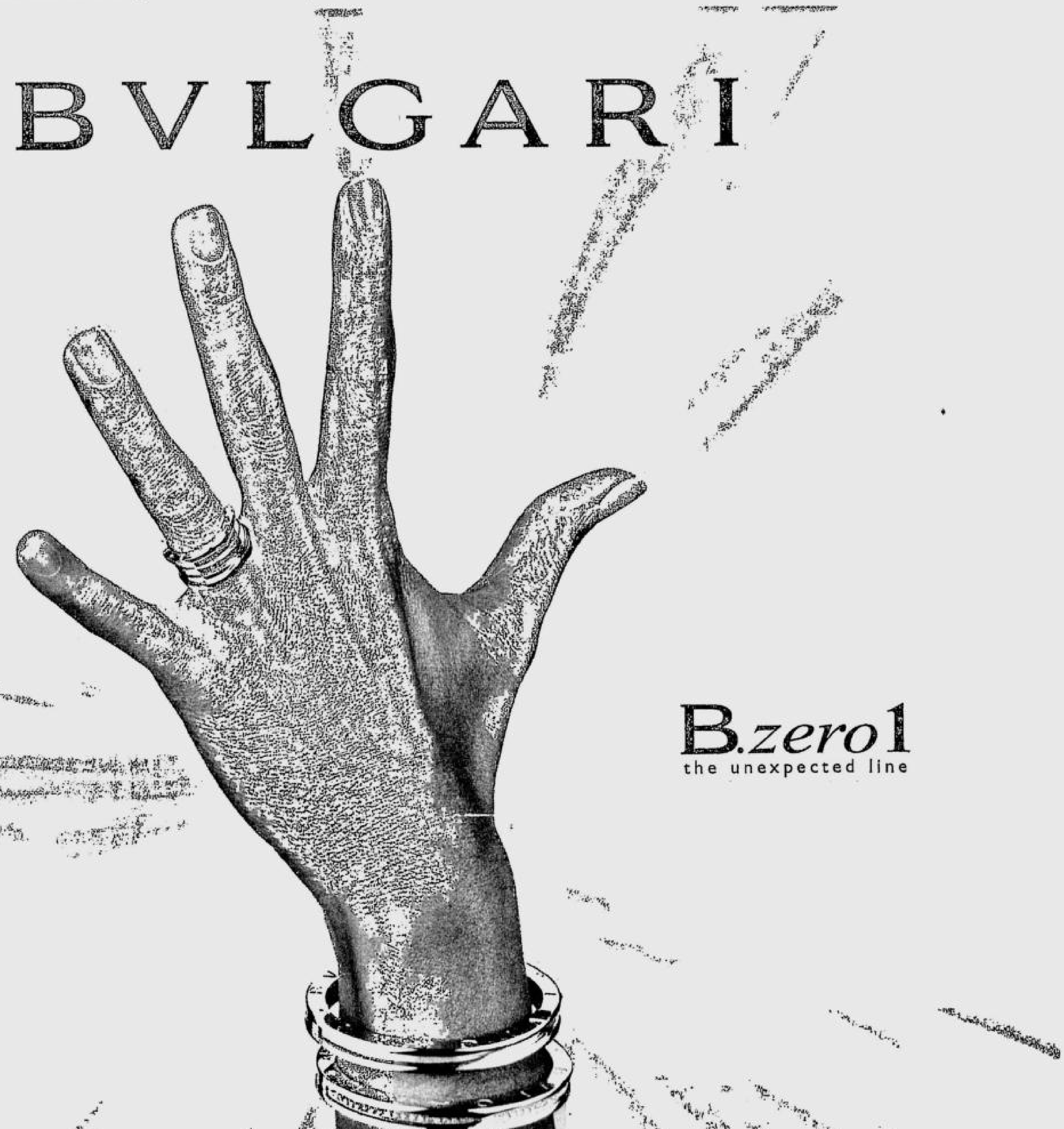
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Haven for the working rich

By Teddy Y. Montelibano
Contributor
(Second of six parts)

PIA LOPEZ nee Montinola saw how her adopted hometown changed: "I tell my kids they can't depend on the land in Bacolod and work on the sugar farms here because these are getting smaller and smaller, subdivided through generations. I tell them, 'Make your own life outside of the province; go to Manila and find jobs.'"

This is the same advice Ria de Villa Montelibano, is preparing to give Ramoncito, her 12-year-old boy, when he goes to college. "I will encourage Cito to go to Manila to develop connections and live a life out there. He can always come back here if he wants to, but that would be his choice after he's seen the world."

Ria had a full life before she met, fell in love with and married Ramon Montelibano. She had a career as merchandise manager, and also designer of ladies' accessories in the ladies' division of Rustan's. She got the job after graduating magna cum laude from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in the US and lived abroad for a while.

She had a doting father and a close-knit family of brothers and sisters who would travel abroad together– as often as twice a year to Rome at the time that her mother, Henrietta de Villa, was envoy to the Holy See, the first Filipina to be appointed to that diplomatic post.

Ria was swept off her feet by Ramon, a dyed-in-the-wool Negrense (his dad is from the province and his mom, the former Miriam Ongsiako, is Manileña). They were married in 1990 and immediately came to Bacolod after their honeymoon to settle in a house that could be regarded as grand even by Manila standards. "I love my husband," Ria says. "I was happy with him, happy living in this gorgeous house. My in-laws and all of Ramon's relatives were very nice. We had an army of help, but I had no friends, my family was far away, and I had nothing to do!"

She recalls the "crazy" things she did to occupy herself during the week. For instance, if she had 30 items in her grocery list, she'd buy five on Monday, another five on Tuesday, and so on, until she'd gone through the entire list. Also, she would fly to Manila a lot during the first two years. "I was half in Bacolod and half in Manila," Ria says. She joined civic clubs like Zonta, just to meet people.

Ramon did not want her to find work that would take her out of the Montelibano compound. Finally, in 1992, two things happened that would make her more grounded in Bacolod: Dona and the Manila Connection.

Dona is the label of formal wear and wedding ensembles that she and her team of skilled sewers crafted inside the family compound for a small, exclusive clientele comprised of friends, family and a few referrals. At about the same time, she was invited to lunch by Pia Lopez and other members of the Manila Connection.

"We sat there trading stories, and it was like group therapy," she recounts. "I was not alone *pala*! All those years, everybody in the Connection was like me, fish out of water. So, okay, I started to come alive!"

(LEFT to right seated) Ria Montelibano, Bubut Acuña, Corina Monfort, Cris Gamboa, Pia Lopez. (left to right, standing) EJ Ramos, Melissa Soliven, Gia Locsin, Clarissa Araneta, Beth Silos, Dang Jacinto

RAMON Ongsiako Montelibano and wife, the former Ria de Villa

KOKOY Locsin and wife, the former Gia Reyes and children

House on the prairie

Initially, there were Pia Lopez, Clarissa Araneta and Gia Reyes Locsin, the wife of Federico Locsin, golfmate of Pia's husband and pioneer in Ernest Escaler's Gourmet Farms. Like Ria, Gia had once done merchandising work for Rustan's, that is, in the Filipiniana department. She was also among the first local entrepreneurs to engage in the imported health food trading business. Both activities Gia had to give up when she married her husband.

"I had absolutely no idea what a farm looked like," says Gia. When her husband told her he intended to work in his family's farm in Negros, she imagined it would be something like a 'Little House on the Prairie,' with a farmhouse and barn, plus chicken, cows and other animals grazing in the field.

When her husband first brought her to the family farm in Cadiz, she looked at this lone structure in the midst of sugarcane fields, and "tears ran down my face!" Just like most of the wives in the Connection, Gia's longing for Manila in the first years of her married life saw her flying back and staying as long as six weeks in a row sometimes.

Eventually, she said, she realized that coming to Bacolod had really been "a blessing because it is a better place to raise a family." She and her husband are with a Christian community of businessmen and professionals in the province. Now Gia says, "I am very happy here, I have found a home here."

Terrific place

The sentiment is shared by other members of the Manila Connection, like Pacita "Bubut" Guevara Acuña who is married to Ding Acuña, brother of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho's wife, Kim; Melissa Santiago-Soliven and Corina Kalaw-Monfort.

All her life, Soliven had been a denizen of Manila's corporate world, and she continued to be so even after she got married and came to Bacolod. Her husband took over the family farms and started other businesses which included, for a time, a ceramics factory. Likewise, Soliven's husband put up and headed Active Land, marketing arm of the property development company Active Group.

At present, she spends her time between Bacolod and the United States, where she takes care of the elderly members of her family. "If I had children," she says, "I would like them to grow up here because it's safe. Everything is convenient and, for as long as your needs are simple and you don't yearn for nightlife, this place is terrific. What you see is what you get."

Bacolod even attracts such super-active people as Corina Kalaw and her husband Ricky Monfort. Corina, daughter of the late banker Edgardo "Hadji" Kalaw and the former Corito Araneta–both of whose roots are Negrense–was working in a stock brokerage firm in San Francisco. She met and married Ricky–who had already been living there for over a decade. When their baby girl was born, both decided they wanted a change of scenery, and came home. To Negros.

Corina now works for the local branch of the country's biggest sugar trading company, All Asia Countertrade Inc., while Ricky takes care of his family's commercial real estate property and a bar, the popular Cyberasia. She misses the conveniences of life in San Francisco and her family and friends. She misses shopping and the wide variety of restaurants in Manila. But, she quickly stresses, "I have very good friends and I've met a lot of nice people here; Negrenses are creative and even if this is the province, the Negrenses have a lot of flair and are, in a sense, cosmopolitan."

No pressures

Pacita "Bubut" Guevara Acuña, meanwhile, was a model and theater artist in Manila. In 1974, she joined the Binibining Pilipinas pageant and represented the country in the Maja International Contest in Spain, where she placed third runner-up. Today, she is busy running the finishing school she put up for winners of beauty contests in the different towns in Negros Occidental province.

She met Ding in New York in 1975. They were married shortly after, and when he was done with school in the US, they came home and he went on to study law at the University of the Philippines. In 1981 the couple flew to Bacolod, where Ding began managing some of the family's properties.

"I had some difficulty learning the dialect," Bubut recounts. Also, I am from Laguna and my voice was big, like one of the characters in the movie, 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding.' When I spoke, all the maids thought I was angry!"

She has since learned to tone down her voice when she speaks Ilonggo. During her friendless years in Bacolod, she remembers, her main concern was, "If I die now, will anyone come to my burial?"

Now her thinking is, whatever Bacolod lacks–shopping, for instance–is more than compensated for by the fact that she has grown really fond of the place. "I like Manila. But I love Bacolod. My children and family are with me here. This is a very serene place. There are no pressures for me. When people ask where I am from, I look at them and say, 'After 25 years in this place, am I not from here? Don't you consider me one of your own?'"

What matters most

Everyone in the Manila Connection agrees that quality of life is practically guaranteed in Negros Occidental. Philip and Clarissa Araneta, for instance, marvel at the fact that they can bring their two elder children to school in the mornings and still have lunch all together at home–which is impossible to do in Manila.

Since 1992, the Aranetas have leased their farm in Cadiz to the tenants, leaving them free to pursue other activities. Philip swears by a certain health supplement which, he says, reduced his high cholesterol and chronic high-blood pressure to normal levels. He is now a big distributor of the product. Clarissa helps him and between this and other business endeavors, they are able to take good care of their growing family. In short, they seem to have found the secret to a good and happy life.

While the limitations to Bacolod life are obvious, the city offers a real lifestyle alternative for people who have "been there and done that." The air is unpolluted, the pace relaxed, the surroundings serene. One can really taste the food he eats ... and smell the roses, so to speak. Are these not, after all, what really matters?

Dancing & dining in Cebu

By Becky Garcia
Contributor

BUSINESS *and* pleasure consisted the agenda of our recent week-long Cebu visit.

The Dancesport Council of the Philippines held its quarterly ranking and competition at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug. The event was a joint venture of the hotel, the City of Cebu, the office of Mayor Tomas Osmeña, and the DCP Cebu Chapter, led by hard-working couple Edward and Eleanor Hayco.

To everyone's surprise, the Grand Ballroom was filled to the rafters. Because of the event's success, Cebu Vice-Mayor Mike Rama and Waterfront president Patrick Gregorio promised they would support all future dancesport events, that would be held in the Queen City of the South.

We were feted by Cebu's social celebs, Amparito and Michel Lhuillier, with dinner at their sprawling residence in the heart of the city. Cocktails and grilled seafood specialties were served at the poolside. Enjoying the al fresco meal with us were Gregorio and his wife, Marichelle, Gerry Richards, and BMW's boss Alex Thorwirth.

Frenchman Garrison Rousseau, who has made Cebu home, also hosted dinner at his lovely Mactan retreat. Guests included Margie Lhuillier, diplomat Bebs Garcia with Texan wife Lisa, Mi Vida owner Natalia Dia, Maybelline Teh and the Lhuilliers.

Cebuano businessman Maz Borromeo hosted lunch at the famous La Tegola Italian Restaurant, owned by an Italian opthalmologist turned restaurateur.

Most of our nights were spent at Mi Vida, Cebu's current party zone, certainly the place to be seen and to people-watch. We spotted society columnist Maurice Arcache, Dondi Joseph, Zee magazine publisher Eva Gullas and its editor Jing Ramos, architect James Hao, Gil Carungay, New York-based chef Stephen Aznar, Mactan Shangri-la's Spa director Mike Monsod, culinary artist Debbie Enriquez, and Natalia's sweetheart, the handsome Spaniard Augusto Jimenez Diaz, who was visiting at the time.

MARGIE Lhuillier, Garrison Rousseau and Natalia Dia

MICHEL and Amparito Lhuillier

ALEX Thorwirth, Patrick Gregorio

Discover Gold in a Bottle

FUNDADOR
FUNDADOR
GOLD RESERVE

Much of the history of the precious metal known as gold is mired in remote antiquity. The lack of hard archeological evidence makes it impossible to pinpoint the time and place of man's first encounter with the noble metal. One of the earliest recorded mentions of gold, however, came from ancient Egypt circa 3000 BC, where pharaohs and temple priests used the shining yellow metal as adornment. Though at the time gold had yet to become the medium of exchange, the ancient Egyptians, who were always deemed to be ahead of their time, knew early on that gold's resplendent luster and scarcity made it perfect material for exquisite jewelry. As such, to this day, anything associated with gold is equated with value.

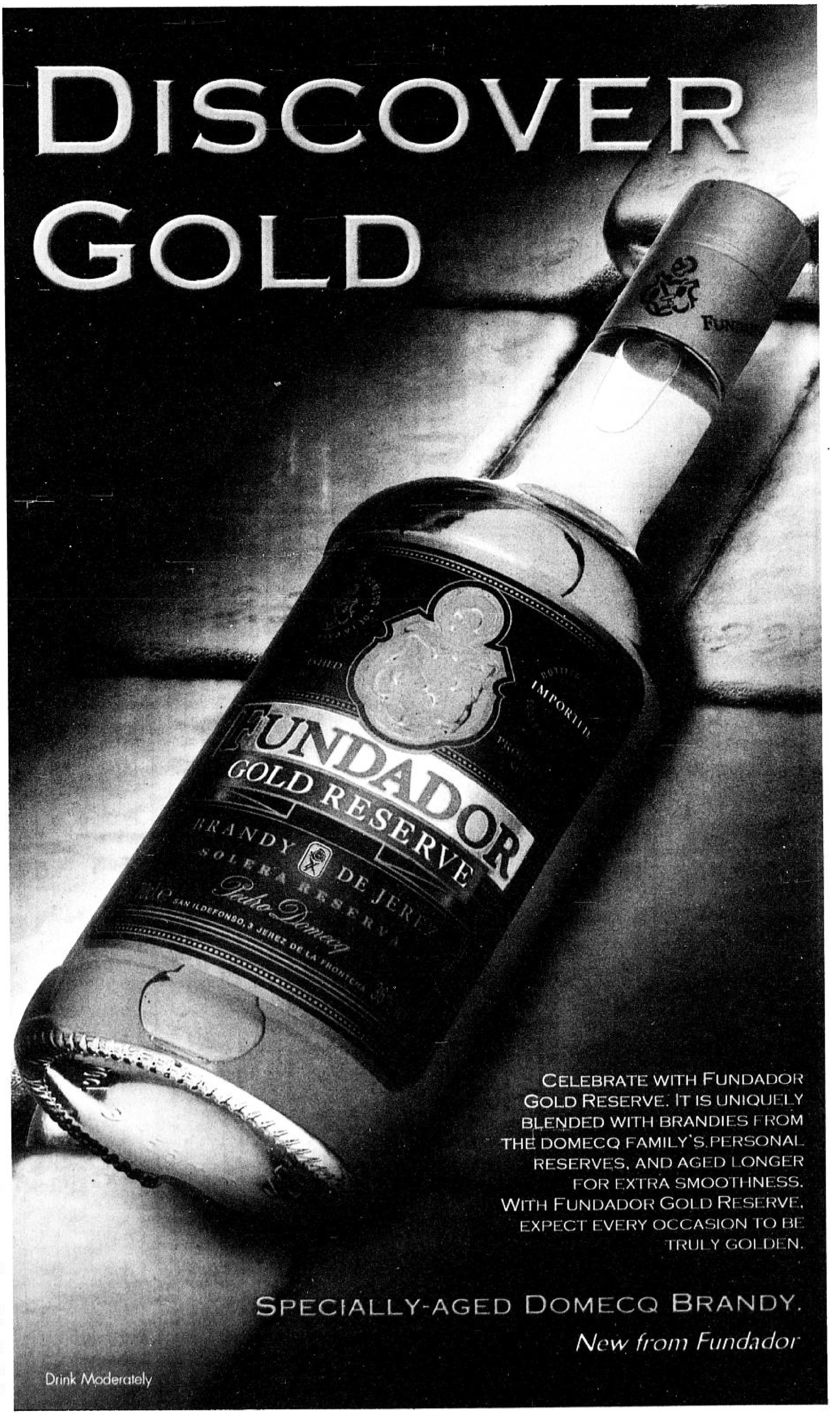
This connection to gold is not lost in the fine art of brandy making. Since 1902, Fundador, produced and bottled by the renowned House of Domecq, has been the standard upon which all other brandies are measured – a product precious in itself. The stringent and painstaking development of Fundador is backed not only by years of experience, but also by a dynamic aging process known as the Solera System, which ensures its consistent quality. Fundador Solera is distilled from the finest Spanish grapes, aged in oak sherry casks, and stored in the bodegas of the Domecq family in Jerez, Spain. With such an established and meticulous process backing it up, it is a small wonder that Fundador has become the number one imported spirit in the Philippines.

How, then, does an established market leader improve on an already exceptional product? The answer is simple: Allied Domecq's foray into further product development has led to the new ***Fundador Gold Reserve*** — a Solera Reserva brandy which is aged longer than its successful sibling. Through further aging and careful blending with brandies from the personal reserves of Don Beltran Domecq himself, the House of Domecq has come up with a rich, warm aromatic brandy that is truly a pleasure to savor. Fundador Gold Reserve's amber and gold color, balanced and clean scent and smooth, lingering flavor invite the senses and invoke a sense of privilege – making it truly worthy of its distinctive name.

Just like the precious metal, which is often set aside for special occasions, ***Fundador Gold Reserve*** is best consumed in times of celebration. With its distinctive characteristics, it is a brandy made a cut above the rest – meant to be consumed by people who have learned to rise above. Its smoother taste and more aromatic scent serves as a reminder of just how special a product it is, and just how special the people who drink it are. Like the pharaohs and high priests of ancient Egypt, they who adorned themselves with gold, Fundador Gold Reserve fits the successful modern man and his lifestyle. The Fundador Gold Reserve experience is one invariably associated with celebrations, special occasions and special people – a crowning glory for personal achievement.

Discovering this kind of golden experience is therefore a joy in itself. With the arrival of ***Fundador Gold Reserve***, they who feel like they've learned to make strides and earn personal victories have indeed found the perfect match. After all, discovering Fundador Gold Reserve is akin to hitting it big – a truly valuable experience to be cherished like the precious metal it has been named after.

ADVT.

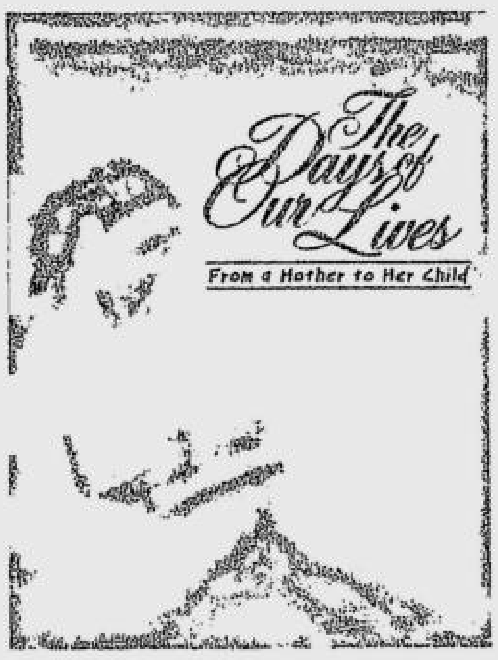


CELEBRATE WITH FUNDADOR GOLD RESERVE. IT IS UNIQUELY BLENDED WITH BRANDIES FROM THE DOMECQ FAMILY'S PERSONAL RESERVES, AND AGED LONGER FOR EXTRA SMOOTHNESS. WITH FUNDADOR GOLD RESERVE, EXPECT EVERY OCCASION TO BE TRULY GOLDEN.

SPECIALLY-AGED DOMECQ BRANDY.

New from Fundador

Drink Moderately


The Days of Our Lives
From a Mother to Her Child

And now, a 'mommy' book

Book Review

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

The Days of Our Lives
From a mother to her child
Rhea Adam, Malou de Joya and Rose Marbil

ALMOST everyone has a "baby book" in their treasure store of souvenirs. I recently unearthed mine, a pink, tattered volume that consists of: a list my first visitors at the hospital and my first gifts, a family tree that my mom failed to complete, faded photographs of my first birthday party, my baptism, and other milestones.

Strangely enough, leafing through the book, I realized these were things I already knew, having had to put together similar projects in grade school, and also from the many photo albums I pored over while I was growing up. What I do not know much of is, what my parents were like when *they* were growing up, before they became my parents.

I'm quite sure many of us have pondered this same thing. I often hear my friends recount how their young son or daughter would ask questions about their first love, or what their school days were like.

It is not surprising that it took three young mothers to address this "issue" by coming up with what I fondly call a "mommy book". Aptly called "The Days of Our Lives", this book aims to fill the void, as it were, in the form of a journal. Meant to strengthen the bond between a mother and her child, it follows the premise of the baby book, the only difference being, instead of focusing on the child, it focuses on the mother.

A sample of the entries: "My Early Childhood Days," "My First School Friends", plus some intimate discussions like "The First Time I Fell In Love" and "My First Kiss." There is plenty of room for "captured moments" where mothers can attach photographs of their choosing, as well as a whole section focusing on a mother's thoughts on her child. Interspersed with classic quotes are actual responses from interviews with mothers and their children. It all ends with an empty envelope for a letter from mother to child.

Though not yet a mother, I try to imagine myself accomplishing this unique journal, and realize what an introspective process it could be: it is also a great way for a mother to get back in touch with herself. Many sections require soul searching, much like writing in a private diary. Even "My First Embarrassing Moment" and "Some Things That Made Me Who I Am" are covered.

There is no doubt that the intended reader will be captivated. A mother can even choose how much information she wants to give at certain points, then add more and more intimate details as the child grows up.

The three young mothers behind this novel idea are Rhea Adam, Malou de Joya and Rose Marbil. They are only in their 30s and have been friends since childhood, having grown up in the same subdivision. Given the post-modern family setup with single and/or working moms, these three women have been balancing the equally daunting tasks of raising kids and earning a living. They thought up this book as a means to communicate with their children. It may not be the perfect substitute for actual quality time, but it is a terrific way of opening up and hopefully becoming closer.

A year in the making, the book entailed weekly meetings to compile original ideas and, eventually, the hiring of a graphic designer to translate the trio's vision. With the help of close friends and family, they then published it themselves.

"The Days of Our Lives" will be carried exclusively by Powerbooks.

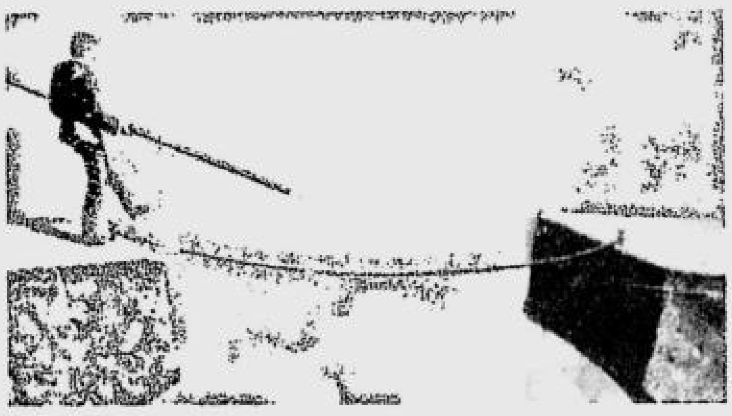
Though a hardbound version that can be passed on from generation to generation would be ideal, cost issues have limited the publishers to a paperback edition for the time being.

Being a big fan of all things interactive, I wonder what they will come up with next. Personally, I think a paternal version should soon follow, to honor the often neglected dads.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

Real Courage creates everyday heroes

Let go of self-imposed limitations and visualize yourself looking down on the mountains of life, seeing them as a small range of hills



By Mike George

SOMETIMES life ahead can look and feel like a mountain. It stands before you as a barrier and a frightening if not awesome prospect, triggering feelings of foreboding and smallness as it drains the enthusiasm from your very veins.

And then along comes one of those mountaineer types, one of those people who thrive on the challenge of climbing a lofty peak, conquering flat rock vertical faces, slaying ice and snow along the way. Watching people like these take on life with gusto, even contempt, can sometimes give you hope. At other times they merely confirm your sense of inadequacy.

But mountains don't have to be climbed just because they stand ahead. The courage of the mountaineer is often mistaken for the ego of "I'm going to conquer you, like it or not."

The energy of that ego is the driving force that takes the climber to the top. Another word for this is ambition, and climbers–of the social type–seldom worry about who they have to clamber over along the way. Everyone knows a good climber, and seldom is he or she the most popular person in the world.

For most people, it takes the courage of honesty to say, "It looks too big for me. I just don't know how to get there." But it is this very honesty that releases the tension of having to confront the monster of the moment, which in turn allows you to see there is another way. All mountains don't have to be climbed the hard way, especially not the one called life.

Extend the courage of honesty into the courage of letting go. Let go of the fear that says, "What if I don't make it?" Let go of the baggage of possessions, which you cannot take with you. Let go of other people's opinions which you had best not bother with.

Wellspring within

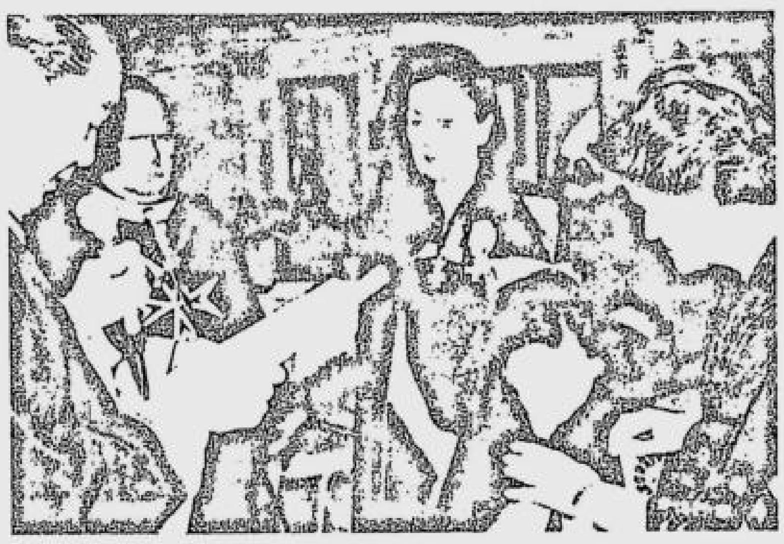
It takes courage to let go of self-imposed limitations and visualize yourself looking down on the mountains of life, seeing them as a small range of hills. This vision alone releases energy for forward movement. And finally, it takes courage to let go of the belief that there is such a thing as fear!

Where is all this courage going to come from? How are you going to access it? Courage is not a packaged or bottled market commodity. To be filled with the energy of courage is to be inspired. There are never doubts in inspiration. There are no fears in spirited effort. The wellspring of courage is within.

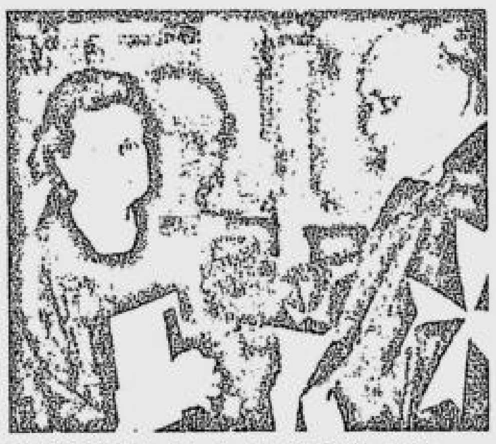
The tales of courage in history books always recall the physical overcoming the physical, the defeat of the enemy. But is this real courage? Or is it an offspring of folly, a defense against the threat of death, obedience to authority for fear of punishment or, as with the mountaineer, the ego's driving need for achievement and recognition?

Few people ever talk about the courage required to admit they are wrong, the courage to go into the meeting with that person you dislike the most, and make yourself like him. Or the courage to see the good side of a person, when all you want to see is the bad; the courage to love, when all you want to do is hate. The courage to climb your own internal mountains of jealousy, anger, self-doubt, and all those feelings that say you are not good enough.

This is the courage that creates real heroes, invisible and unsung–heroes taking on their mountains and quietly inspiring others to reach for their own peaks.

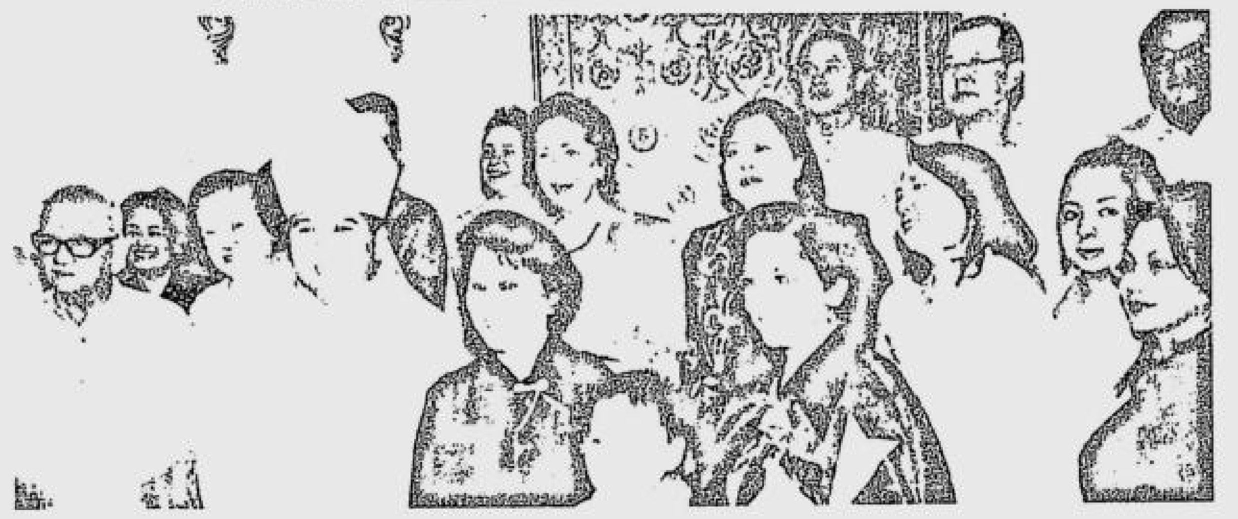


DON Leocadio de Asis, Knight Grand Cross of Magistral Grace and president of the Philippine Association of the Sovereign Order of Malta, conducts the investiture of Mercy Tuason, who is flanked by her sponsors Rosemarie Prieto and Bea Zobel



BEATRIZ Zobel de Ayala, Gold Medal for Religious and Charitable Works and Don Ramon Pedrosa

DONA Lena Vera Dualan, awardee



(**FIRST** row) Andres Liboro, Conchita Benitez, Bishop Socrates Villegas, Teresita Tambunting Liboro, page boy Iolani Tambunting, Ambassador Henrietta de Villa, Vicky and Therese Tambunting, Lynn Liboro; (second row) Heubi and Marilou Mueller, Aurora Tambunting, Ambassador Isabel Wilson, Monette Galang, Victor Tambunting, Joselito Tambunting and Ben Liboro.

A h[illegible] with[illegible]

For these charitable souls, life should be an expression of caring and sharing

DON Luis Ramon Quimson, Gold Medal Awardee

NELLIE Delgado

PAPAL Awardee Chito Madrigal Collantes

EVEN as the crisis in human affairs worsens, many charitable souls continue to help build a better world.

For them, life is an expression of caring and sharing, and so their ability to appreciate it never flags. These humanitarians have been recognized by the Church for their role in reaching out to communities with the end in view of providing the poor and the [illegible] chance to rediscover hope.

The Philippine Association of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta recently held the Liturgical Investiture Rites Award of Honors at the Archbishop's Palace.

The Order of St. John of Jerusalem was founded in the 11th century by St. Gerard to fight poverty. The Philippine Association was established by Don Paulino Miranda Sampedro, a Spanish Knight, in 1948. Members of this lay religious order, given the titles Knights and Dames, have dedicated their lives to promoting values and performing charity. The aim of the Knights and Dames of Malta is to become the best people they can be in the Church, and serve the sick and the needy.

During the rites, philanthropists **William Legaspi Olalia, Lena Vera Dualan, Teresita Tambunting Liboro and Mercedes Arrastia Tuason** were received as candidates for membership of this prestigious organization. The Pro Merito Melitense Honors, or awards of merit, were given to a member of the order **Luis Ramon Quimson** (whose title is Knight of Magistral Grace), and [illegible] non-member **Beatriz Zobel de Ayala.**

One has to be invited and sponsored to become part of [illegible] order. The criteria consist of how one [illegible] the values of the Catholic Church, and one's track record of humanitarian activities. Candidates undergo a year-long "grace" period before they become bona fide members. Stories of their sacrifices are nothing short of inspiring.

Teresita Liboro recalls that her mother, the late Doña Aurora Tambunting, envisioned a church that would serve the poor. Her brothers, the late Ramon Tambunting and Jose, financed the project and Liboro was tasked to see the completion.

"God was behind me. I didn't know anything about construction, let alone building a church," she says. Being resourceful, Liboro worked with architect Susan Castillo who offered her services for free and looked for suppliers who could provide quality materials at bargain prices.

In six months a church that could accommodate 1,000 worshippers was built in Bagong Silang, Caloocan City. With her two brothers, Liboro also donated the Tambunting Hall at the [illegible]ational M[illegible] [illegible]op [illegible] Liboro [illegible] [illegible] cause. For [illegible] building [illegible] vacation [illegible] [illegible]om [illegible] Bat[illegible] [illegible] planned, she [illegible] that the [illegible] sources should instead benefit [illegible] whole communit[illegible] The family buil[illegible] two pavilions that now hou[illegible] more than [illegible] hundr[illegible] [illegible]able children at [illegible] Elsie Ga[illegible] Vi[illegible]

Mercede[illegible] Tu[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]end Be[illegible] [illegible] brough[illegible] [illegible] Tala Leprosarium. Ov[illegible] the years Tuason and friends Josie Bantu[illegible] **Maribel Ongpin, Rosemarie Prieto, Trini[illegible] Panicucci** and Ms [illegible] Batanes to Minda[illegible] [illegible]mfort the need[illegible] and the [illegible] [illegible]oined distrib[illegible]tions of relief [illegible] [illegible] areas. They [illegible] gone as far as Itbayat [illegible]slan[illegible] (four hours [illegible] boa[illegible] [illegible]om Bat[illegible] [illegible] in the nam[illegible] of ser[illegible] The[illegible] [illegible]en forsake the comfo[illegible] of Makati to [illegible] the provinces, staying [illegible] convents [illegible] at bisl[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]olish thei[illegible] [illegible]ion[illegible]

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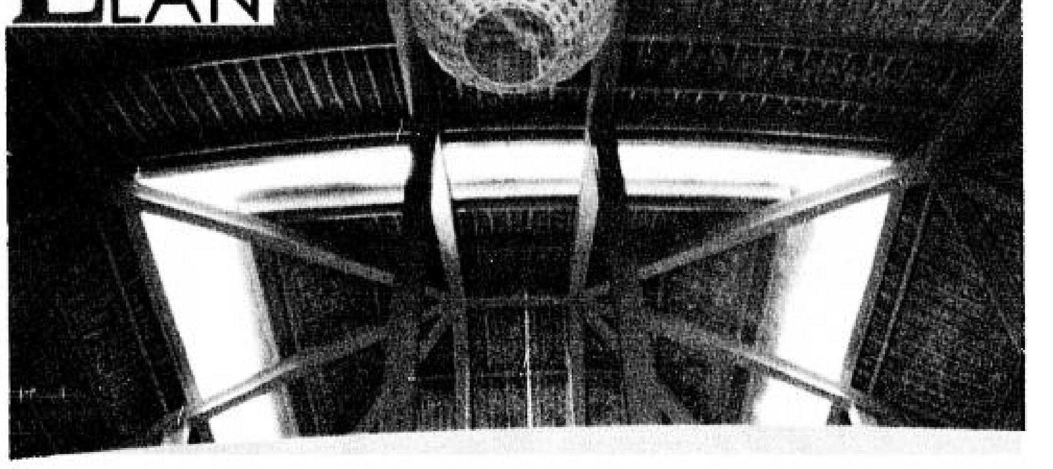
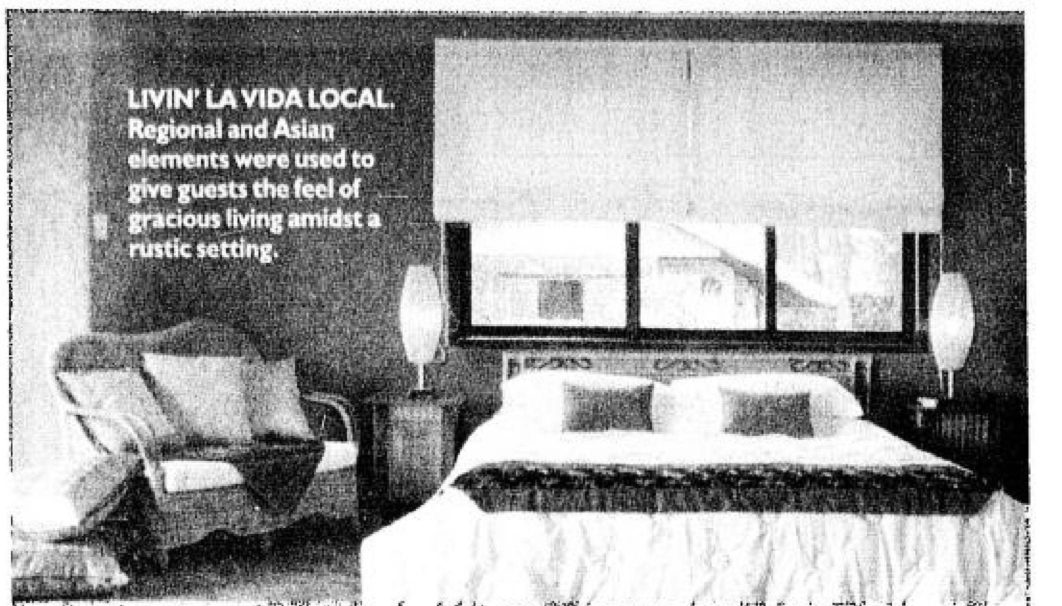
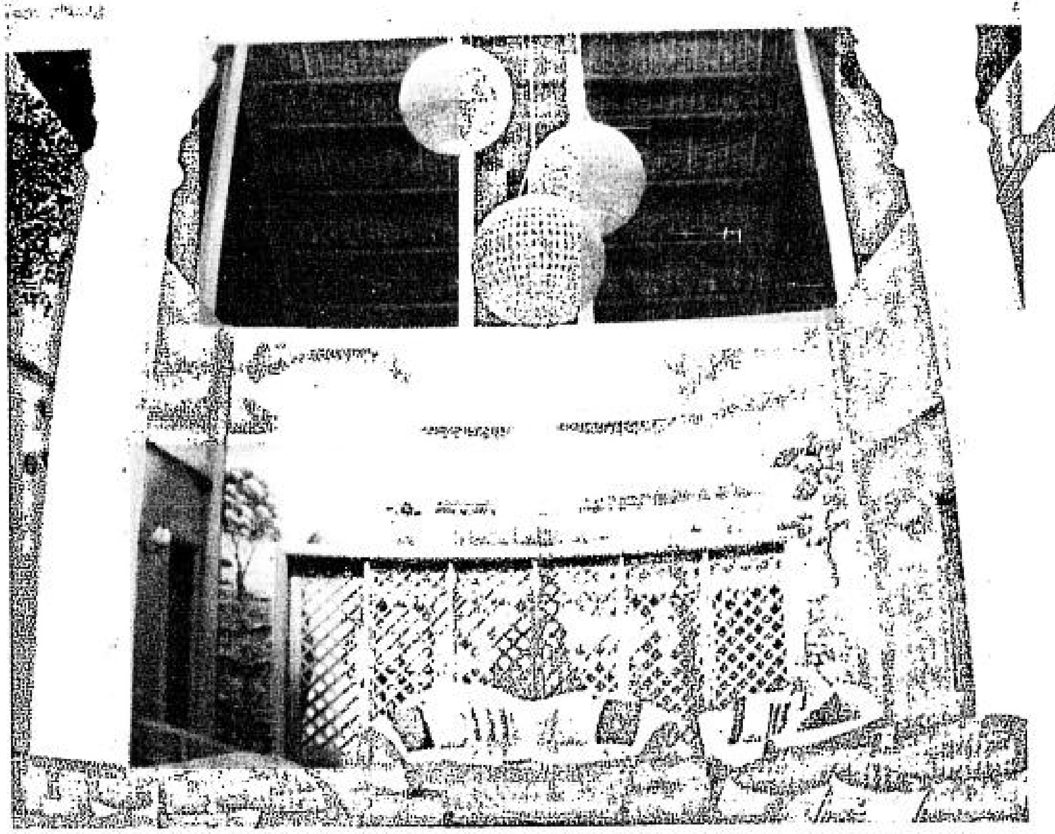




LIVIN' LA VIDA LOCAL. Regional and Asian elements were used to give guests the feel of gracious living amidst a rustic setting.



IMPERIAL RED. Ernest Santiago transformed the Imperials' former head house into a nipa hut of colorful and very grand proportions.

A weekend such as this

By Meluchi A. Rivera, Contributor
Photos by Bobot Meru
Pictorial direction by Albert Avellana

SAY MILLIONS! Porta Azure's "money shot," with the Mayon in the background and the sea a few meters from the veranda.

THIS FIRST visit to Bicol was charmed from the start.

The Mayon Volcano deigned to give this writer a splendid view as the plane taxied down Legaspi City's lone airstrip.

Trite as it sounds, it is indeed majestic–this mountain of mythically perfect proportions, towering at 7,500 feet above the surrounding landscape. Against a great blue canvas of sky, The Mayon seemed to preen, flexing her sun-dappled slopes that wore various shades of green. Adding just a little more drama, a wisp of smoke issued from the summit, and a small clump of cumulus hung about a third of the way from the top, as though deliberately painted there.

The Mayon is said to be a capricious dame who does not always show herself to all travelers. When Gregorio S. Imperial, owner of Porta Azure and my host for the weekend, heard of our postcard-worthy first glimpse, he quipped: "That means you are welcome." He said the summit could just as easily cloud over, and that there were times when the great mountain would hide for days, as if sulking.

Porta Azure

Imperial's good-natured, unassuming mien belies the fact that he was Legaspi's mayor for over 20 years–until the early '80s. These days, Imperial and wife Emma are the driving force behind Asia Leisure Escapes (632-842-3671 and 807-8414) which has developed Porta Azure and another property in Caliraya into family getaway destinations.

Located in Barangay Padang, Legaspi–a 20-minute ride from the airport–Porta Azure seems closer to the ex-mayor's heart, being in the city he calls home; indeed, this was once his private beachfront abode.

Designer Ernest Santiago's deft hand transformed the family dwelling into a nipa hut of colorful and very grand proportions. The main structure is striking, with a high thatched roof and external walls painted deep azure, a vivified shade of Albay's blue waters from which the resort derives its name. It is built like a piazza, the central lounge opening to a veranda with sweeping views of the garden and the sea.

Off to the rear and on each side are suites, here called villas, which have either one or two bedrooms, plus fully-equipped kitchens and dining areas because, yes, guests may choose to bring and cook food in the premises. With luxurious beds, well-appointed bathrooms and a staff ready to fulfill guests' every whim, the resort is the only one of its class in Bicol.

The region's famed handicrafts have been combined with other Asian elements to give guests the experience of gracious living amidst a rustic setting. Two huge camelback sofas in the lounge are upholstered in woven *nito*, a grass variety sourced from nearby Anislag in Daraga town. These sofas and all the other chairs are laid out with local and Oriental throws and pillows for even more texture. Local rattan is used widely for the furnishings–from beds, love seats and streamlined lounge chairs, to wall dividers and large woven globes that function as chandeliers in the lounge. Clay items, such as wind chimes, jars, basins, and tiles on a ledge beneath the house's eaves were custom-made for the resort by a factory in Tiwi.

The walls in the main lounge are bathed in red, save for the one opposite the veranda, which sports a mural echoing the view of the bay. Tall white columns support a central beam and lend drama to the sky-lit space. At night, one looks back from the beach, and the house glows as if lit like a giant lantern. The lights in the lounge bounce off the walls and exude a deep amber glow.

Santiago's touch can also be seen in the ingenious use of commonplace objects: yards of white fishnets are used as awning over the wide verandah. Bunched seashells dangle from the edge of each strip, a decorative way to keep the ends from flapping too much in the breeze.

Cabanas dot the stark, Zen-inspired garden. These are great areas from which to view the Albay Gulf–the shores of Manito to the right, Sto. Domingo to the left and, farther off, the islands of Batan and Rapu-Rapu.

Guests may even chance upon locals in action. During our stay, we saw two fishermen struggling to haul the day's catch–a 30-kilo swordfish–off to market. The resort will soon have its own motor boat and can thus commence island-hopping activities. This would be a great way to fully appreciate Porta Azure's "money shot"–the magnificent Mayon behind it, and the sea just a few steps away.

We are given time on our first day to wander around the resort and feel the fine black sand beneath our feet (volcanic sand is said to be very good for the skin). In the afternoon we visit the Cagsawa ruins for that must-have photo. And then we are off to Legaspi City's market for *pili* and *mazapan*, *buri* hats and bags; and to Tiwi for red clay items (alas, the hot springs have dried up). These jaunts are wonderful, but it is on our second day that we experience what has made many visitors long to return to Bicol again and again.

Giants of Donsol

The adventure begins when our group of optimists, including resort manager Ricky Loterte, sets out at 7:30 a.m. We are at the Donsol Municipal Hall in an hour; and there we learn that the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has been working with the local government in setting up a Butanding eco-tourism center.

After five years of education, the community is well aware that they directly benefit from protecting the whale shark (Rhincodon typus), the largest fish in the world. Locals have been trained as guides (or Butanding interaction officers), spotters and boat operators for interaction tours.

March to May is peak Butanding season, but whale shark visits are known to happen sporadically from January until September. The charge of P2,500 covers payment for the boat, guide and spotter for the whole day, though sightings are only "guaranteed" until about 1 p.m. To minimize the tours' impact on the whale shark's natural rhythm, only 15 boats at a time, with seven tourists each, are allowed on the bay.

We fill out data sheets and are given handouts (we forego the video briefing due to a power outage), and quickly set out for Donsol Bay.

Did I mention that this was a charmed visit? Ten minutes after pushing off from the shore, our guide had us readying our fins, snorkels and goggles for our first up-close meeting with the Butanding. At first, they appear like large shadows in the water. As the boat creeps closer, the shape of a tail or a fin becomes discernible, and then the trademark white spots become visible from above the water. In our two-and-a-half-hour foray into the bay, we see a couple of juveniles about three meters long, and become well acquainted with a seven-meter character whom we are privileged to encounter twice. The biggest one we sight, eight meters long, dwarfs our fishing boat.

We are treated to no less than 14 sightings, 10 of which result in very close interactions. How close? In-the-water-and-within-two-feet-of-a-dorsal-fin close. We follow our guide's lead and try to keep about three meters away from the whale shark, but as these wonderful beasts glide across the water, they sometimes pass us from a distance of a mere arm's length.

At half past noon, we call it a day, senses reeling from the sublime experience. We shower and take lunch at a nearby resort, then stumble back into Porta Azure, exhausted and happy.

Later, as I sink into soft pillows and set the alarm for the next morning's flight to Manila, I feel my limbs aching from that morning's exertions. But what's a little soreness in exchange for a weekend such as this? I was welcomed and watched over by a noble mountain, swam with the mightiest of fish, and slumbered amidst beauty and comfort.

Ah, bliss.

Phone promo ends tomorrow

GLOBE'S "Cream of the Crop" promo, which ends tomorrow, offers the widest range of handsets which a new subscriber can get for free or at great discounts. The promo is still ongoing at Globe Telecom Business Centers and the Hub at the Podium, Glorietta and Rockwell.

Offered free with the G-Max plan are the Nokia 3650 with MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service), video streaming capability and built-in camera; the Nokia 7650, Nokia 7210 and Nokia 6100, which are MMS-capable colored phones; and the Siemens S57's, also an MMS-capable phone that comes with a free digital camera accessory.

The Nokia 8910i, a colored phone with features such as MMS and midnight black titanium cover, and the Sony Ericsson P800, a top-of-the-line colored, tri-band PDA phone with MMS and a built-in camera, are offered at special discounted rates with the G-Max Plan, or free with the Globe Platinum Plan.

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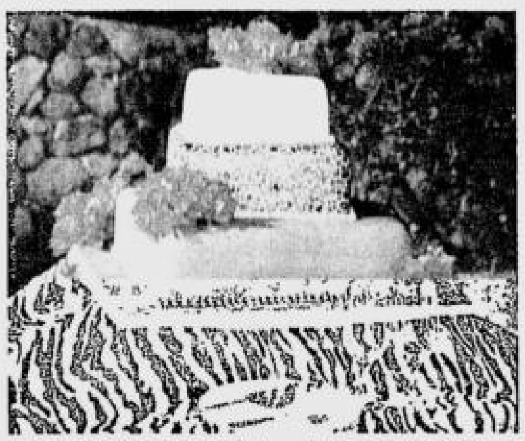
Not your traditional cookie-cutter wedding

On a balmy Saturday, with a backdrop of sea and setting sun, Phillip Hagedorn and Techie German exchanged wedding vows that they themselves wrote

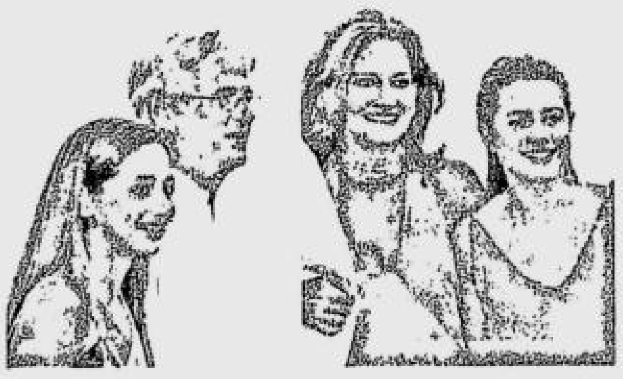
JOE Hagedorn, Cristina Davila, Christian Hagedorn, Camila Soriano, Patricia Ottiger and mother of the groom, Pamen Hagedorn

PHOTOS BY BOBOT MERU

THE NEWLYWEDS



ADVENTUROUS and risqué. Exactly how the couple wanted the cake to be.

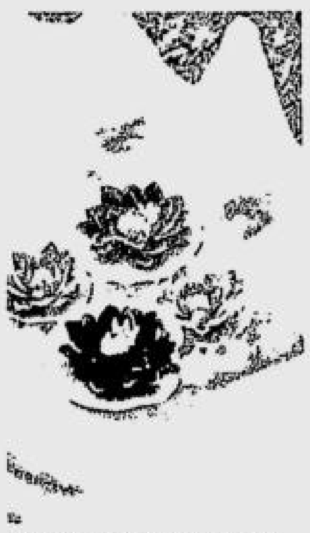


ANDY and Cristy Soriano with daughters Cristina and Camila

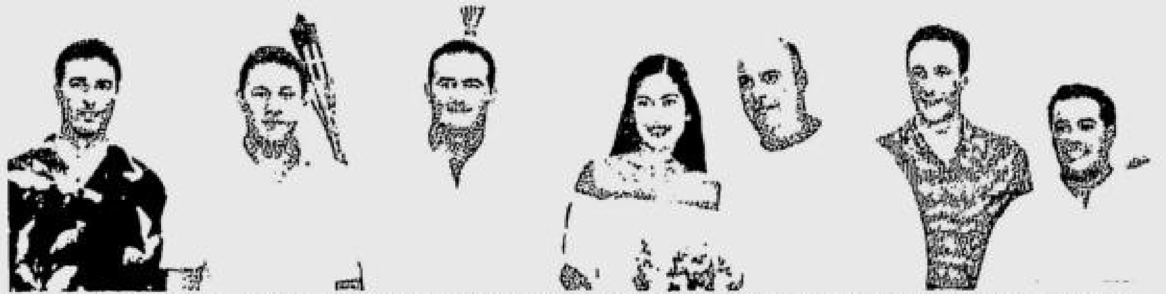
THE COUPLE with Techie's best friends, Odette Pumaren, Ila Alvarez and Cinty Curran

BRIDE's parents Reli and Josephine German

PAMEN and Francisco Elizalde



VIA MARE's romance-by-the-sea thematic decor.



THE GROOM'S buddies: Christopher Hagedorn, Ames Legarda, Patxi Elizalde, Techie and Phillip, Miguel Picornel and Jon Rocha

SOFIA Elizalde

IT WASN'T your traditional cookie-cutter wedding. But then, the couple was not your traditional bride and groom.

Phillip Hagedorn, eldest son of the late great stockbroker **Fred Hagedorn** and **Pamen Sanchez**, had enjoyed the life of a bachelor and man-about-town; while **Techie German**, daughter of PR wizard **Reli** and **Josephine German**, had grown wary of marriage and was in no hurry to walk down the aisle.

But after they met on a blind date in 2001, they were inseparable. The decision to marry came not from romantic notions of happy-ever-aftering. Rather, it came as Phillip and Techie realized there was no person they would rather laugh and cry with, perhaps bicker with, and yes, grow old with, than the other. Thus on that warm Saturday, against a backdrop of the sea and the setting sun, Phillip and Techie exchanged vows that they themselves wrote .

The location was quite dramatic: a grassy lawn beside one of the cliffs at Tali Beach, in Nasugbu, Batangas. The bride's ecru, off-shoulder gown by **Lyn Lagdameo** had flowing chiffon sleeves and a short train that billowed wistfully in the wind; while the groom's stylized linen *barong* and black wide-legged pants were in keeping with the relaxed beach setting.

Fr. **Mike Duffin** officiated the rites. Witnesses for the groom were brother **Christopher Hagedorn**, childhood friends **Patxi Elizalde**, **Jon Rocha**, **Ames Legarda**, and US-based **Miguel Picornell**. For the bride, witnesses were elder sister **Mayet Tiaoqui**, friends and colleagues **Karen Tiong**, **Jeanette Marabut**, **Odette Pumaren**, and **Cinty Curran**, who flew in from Hong Kong. A garland of flowers was used for the symbolic "tying of the knot," with the groom's sailing buddy **Andy Soriano** and the bride's UK-based sister **Chinot Thomson** doing the honors.

It was an intimate affair, with only family and friends. Phillip's family also included **Jaime** and **Cristina Davila**, **Stephanie Hagedorn**, **Patxi** and **Pamen Elizalde**, **Carl** and **Patricia Ottiger**, **Joe** and **Ane Hagedorn**, **Tito** and **Colo Picornell**, **Santi** and **Marilen Elizalde**, **Carlos** and **Melissa Elizalde** and **Vicky Soriano**. Others on the bride's side were brothers-in-law **Alisdair Thomson** and **Sandy Tiaoqui**, and younger brothers **Lito** and **Alan** with their wives, **Ditas** and **Doris**.

A reception followed at the sprawling garden of the Hagedorn Tali beach house where some 200 guests gathered, among them Tali neighbor **Jojo Silverio**, **Carlos** and **Cay Araneta**, **Juanjo Berenguer** and **Judith Zapanta**, **Noli Legarda**, **Brian Head**, **Fern** and **Junie Peña**, and **Becca Dosch**.

Also among the wellwishers: **Don Anton Roxas**, **Ricky Recto**, **Iñaki** and **Anna Ugarte**, **Juan Jose** and **Miren Berenguer**, **Miguel** and **Claudia Tambunting**, **Rosanna Fores**, **Jaime Legarda**, **Daniel Brias**, **Steve Maniquis**, **Santi Freixas**, **Che** and **Asun Soler**, **Martin** and **Grace Valencia**, **Albert** and **Monica Altura**, **Paolo Prieto** and **Ciara Sevilla**.

Aside from a buffet spread by Via Mare, guests were treated to drinks, dancing and fireworks. **Cookie Chua**'s band provided entertainment well into night. In lieu of the traditional garter and bouquet throwing, the newlyweds made unmarried friends go through a compatibility quiz game with their significant others. **Alfred Torres** and **Mia Veroy**, **Alex Tiu** and Karen Tiong, **Javi Berenguer** and **Lexi Schulze**, **Santi Picorn**[illegible]d **Kimmy Johnson** were asked con-qu[illegible]ntial questions, especially about crucial [illegible]ates and their partner's hobbies and "secrets." Couples who have been married a long time were honored and asked to dance.

The short program allowed guests like **Frankie Araneta**, **Vicky Esguerra**, **Sofia Elizalde**, **Joey Hagedorn**, Andy Soriano and Carlos Araneta to toast the couple. But Phillip's three "best men" Patxi Elizalde, Jon Rocha and Ames Legarda dispensed with the customary speeches and, in a touching gesture, presented a video montage instead. And so, with pictures showing Phillip's and their own growing up years, they highlighted an enduring friendship. There were shots of the four men, first as children playing together, then as teenagers on family trips to Majorca, Spain and, later, as adults on "male bonding" jaunts to Pamplona. The slide show ended with Phillip finding his "new" best friend, Techie.

It was a night when everyone present seemed heady as much with drink as with merriment, and the air teemed with wishes of love and happiness for the new Mr. and Mrs. Hagedorn. *Meluchi Rivera*

How to impress consistently

By Meluchi A. Rivera
Contributor

LONGEVITY is becoming rare in the restaurant business these days as faddish, fickle palates pursue ever-changing dining fare. The term "dining establishment" is fast becoming an oxymoron; food places are "out" before they have time to establish themselves.

Zen belongs to the select few that have been called and chosen. When it opened in Glorietta 3 (tel. no. 892-6851) in 1994–it is still in the same spot–the owners hoped to woo a younger, hipper crowd of Japanese food lovers. Zen quickly found a niche by positioning itself between the typical Japanese restaurant of that time, which either catered to the very high end, or were of the fast-food/take-out/all-you-can-eat variety.

Now on its ninth year, Zen keeps people coming back by tweaking the menu here and there, while maintaining its best sellers. It recently launched its delivery service; perfect not only for lunch but also for board meetings and small functions. An added come-on for the busy executive is that items are brought in authentic Japanese lacquerware, instead of depressing styro boxes and plastic spoons.

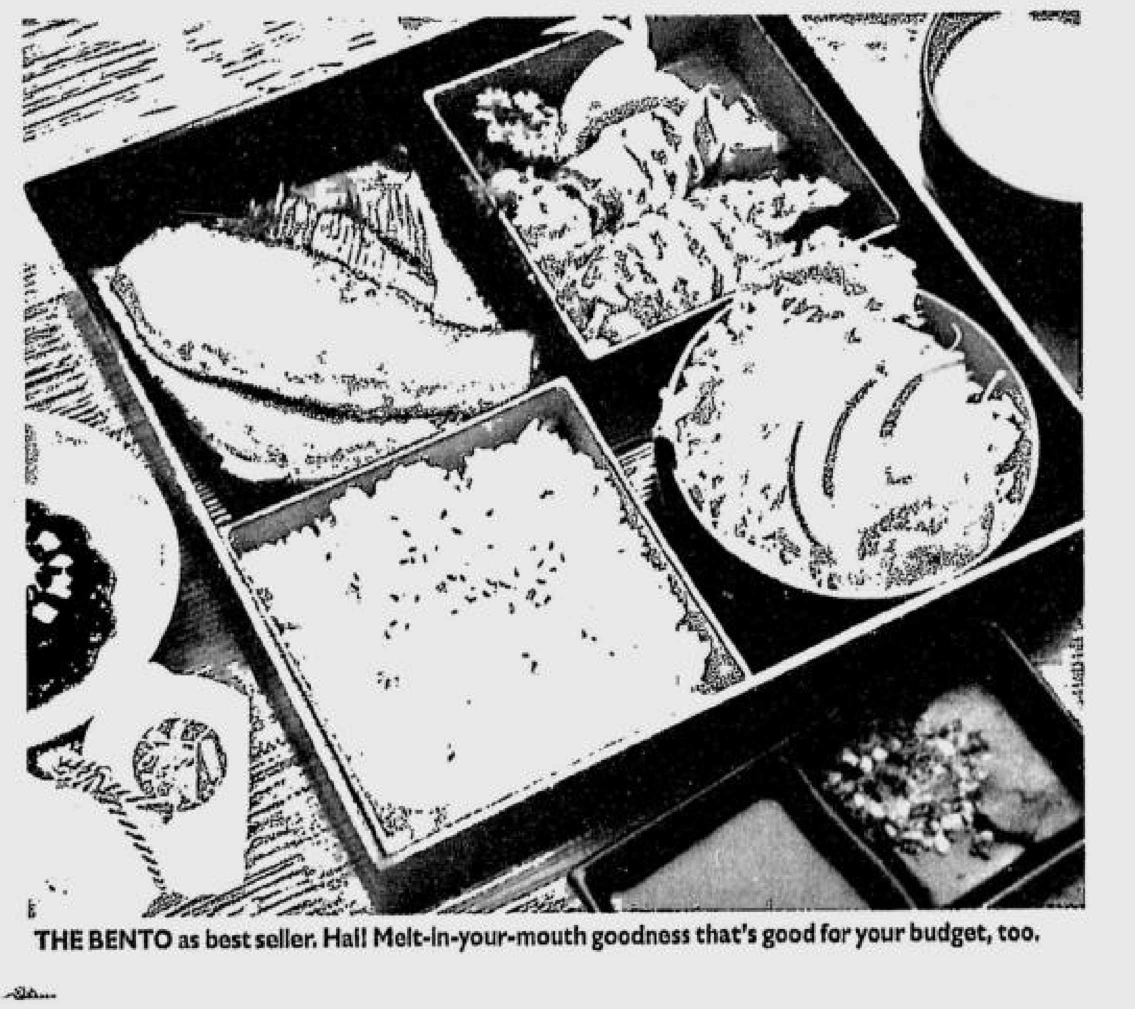
During our visit, four appetites took on four versions of the bento-boxed meals, and were more than sated. Each bento box is value-packed: one gets an appetizer (either sushi or salad), two entrées, miso soup, rice and dessert (fruit or jelly) for under P300. We noted happily that portions were adequate and, in parts, quite generous; there were no "throw-away" dishes and ingredients did not differ from those used in regular menu items.

The *gindara* and *tempura* bento, Zen's best-seller despite being the priciest at P450, is well worth it for the melt-in-your mouth grilled cod and three large, crisp pieces of prawn tempura. Other mentionables include the steak-grilled rolls of tofu wrapped in strips of marinated beef , an interesting contrast in textures. Zen has also come up with the chicken *teriyaki* and *saikoro* (tenderloin) steak combo, perfectly seared, which made my carnivore-friend happy.

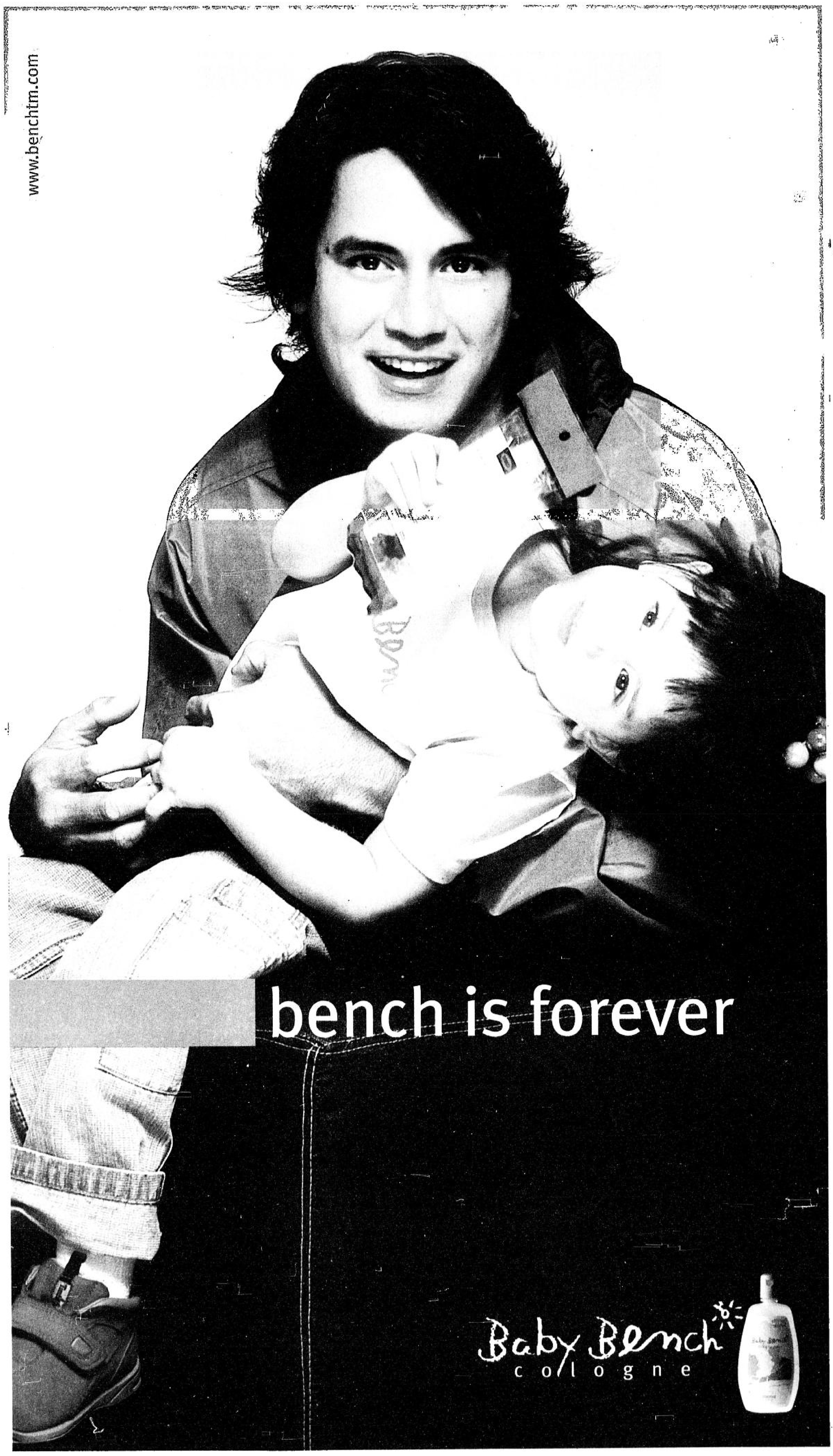
On the other end of the spectrum is a new vegetarian menu. We had the *moyakyu*, baby cucumbers with fermented soybean; steamed asparagus; and the *horenzo* tofu, blanched spinach topped with fried tofu, seasoned with sesame oil and the *teriyaki* tofu. We came away amazed at the wealth of flavors now available to the health-conscious set.

Zen has also unveiled a range of dishes for the hot summer days. Try the *somen* surprise, cold white noodles topped with *ebi, kani, tamago* and cucumber; or the summer *udon* salad. The hearty servings may initially intimidate, but be assured that the flavors are light and leave the diner feeling cool, not weighed down at all. The *uni tempura* is also a revelation, with the *nori* and *sisho* leaves enhancing the fishy taste of the sea urchin. Try them with flavored tofu shake.

New restaurants can always surprise and impress; Zen has managed to surprise and impress consistently, and over time–a real feat.



THE BENTO as best seller. Hail Melt-in-your-mouth goodness that's good for your budget, too.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Heating up the summer at Rustan's

RUSTAN'S heats up the summer with activities that showcase everything that's hot this season. Rustan's gives us a peek at the trends in fashion and lifestyle for summer with a series of fashion shows from its men's ladies' and young adults' sections at its Makati, Shangri-la and Alabang branches. Rustan's is also set to introduce new names in fashion for men. Fashion labels from Europe and the United States will be launched and introduced to shoppers by the end of April. These are complemented by fabulous promo acitvities that will surely make shoppers go back for more.

Ladies' Department	"What a Little Kiss Can Do" Free lip-smacked soap for every purchase of Little Kiss	April 2-11	Rustan's Makati
	Trunk Show	May 1	Rustan's Makati
Men's Department	Pick-A-Prize Pick a prize for every P2,000 purchase from the men's department	April 11-30	All stores including Cebu
	Trunk Show	April 25	Rustan's Shangri-la Plaza
Young Adult's Department	"U CD Soundscape 2" Free CD with every P3,000 purchase	April 15 May4	Rustan's Makati and Alabang
	Trunk Show	April 12	Rustan's Alabang
Cosmetics & Toiletries Dept.	Free Nail Art at the U Floor	April 12	Rustan's Alabang
	Free Sun Tattoo at Clarins Counters	April 1-30	Rustan's Makati Shangri-La, Alabang, Harrison Plaza and Institut Clarins

Children's Dept.	Summer Tote Bag GWP Free tote bag for every P2,000 minimum purchase at the children's department.	April 10-30	All Metro Manila Stores
	Children's Summer Workshops:		
	- Tiny Kitchen	April 5	Rustan's Makati
	- Art Workshop	April 6	
	-Arts, Craft, Magic Workshop	April 11	
	- Manners, Manners Everywhere	April 13	
Rustan's Home	Home Rewards Promo Earn reward points with every purchase at Rustan's Home. Points can be redeemed for exciting reward items.	April 5 October 5	All Metro Manila Stores
	Gift with Purchase		
	- Ferraboli Griller GWP Free apron set with every purchase of Stores Ferraboli griller.	April 1-30	All Metro Manila
	- Free portable cooler with AM/FM radio for minimum purchase worth P3,000 from Plasticware Dept.	April 15 May 15	Metro Manila and Cebu

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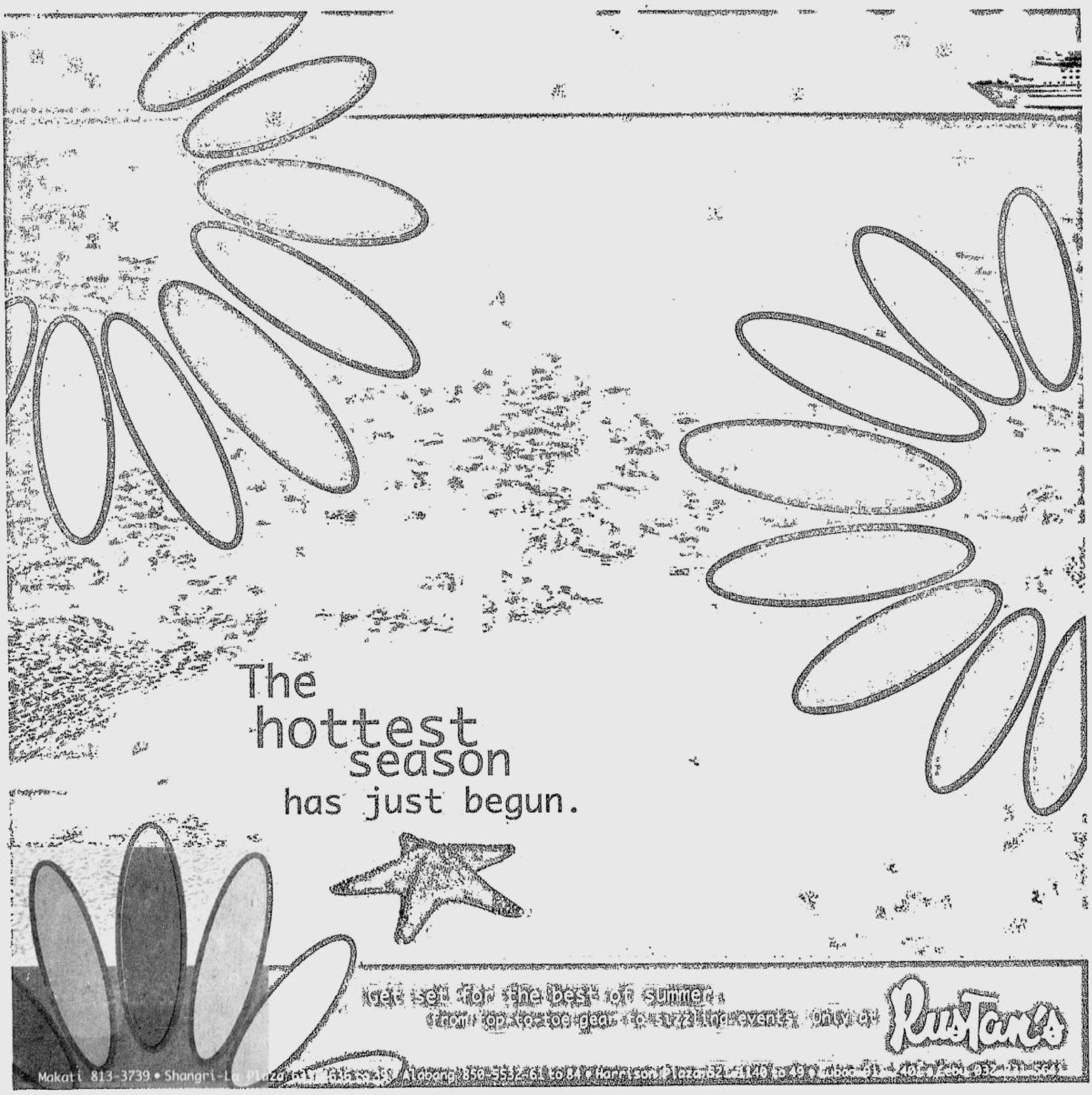
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One true thing

By Marge C. Enriquez

"TRUE fashion–insider's fashion–is about state of mind," says author Colin MacDowell. Fashion mindsets could be neither here nor there, making them unfathomable to those outside the circle of mavens.

But one woman, to this day, continues to be admired for a certain sort of craziness that she claimed for her own.

Spanish designer-turned-restaurateur Helena Carratala Guerrero was arguably the Philippines' most original character. To those who knew her, she was ahead of her time. The woman who invented the trendy label Azabache (which means "black" in Catalan) was the perfect fashion icon for her singular and elegant style. She was daring without being camp, and there was nothing predictable about her or her collection.

Helena was married to businessman Xavier "Wahoo" Guerrero. Although she never had any formal background in fashion, the imaginative Helena would design clothes for her two daughters. People were so impressed with the children's clothes, that friends eventually advised her to make clothes for adults.

Shocking black

Restaurateur and fashion plate Mary Ann Cuenca-Tinio met Helena in 1973, when the latter started custom-made clothes. Tinio recalls that Helena had a refreshing and spirited approach to color and pattern, and yet her early silhouettes were easy to wear and flatteringly feminine. (Tinio kept many of the Azabache clothes that you see on this spread. Elan presents a *"baul* collection," literally by setting the clothes against artsy caskets designed by former mother-in-law Elena Roces.)

In 1976, Helena launched her ready-to-wear label, Azabache. With her husband as financier and official photographer, she opened a small boutique on Pasay Road, Makati then eventually moved to ShoeMart. Tinio recounts that the store was "shocked" at the all-black collection, the Sys being Chinoys and superstitious about the color. Yet, women were snapping up the clothes.

Helena pulled it off–transforming the cheapest fabrics into spunky garments that had Manila's social set running to the store every week. When was the last time a local label brought fun to shopping and wearing clothes?

Azabache introduced high-heeled and neon-colored sneakers in the 1970s. It's only in the past few years that both athletic brands and designers' houses started developing the fashion sneaker. Before "Flashdance" popularized leggings, Azabache had patterned leg wear.

"You were always a standout wearing an Azabache," says Tinio. "I once wore striped leggings, and someone approached me and asked if I had just come out of prison."

Perfect model

Electrika (a.k.a Josephine Go) was the perfect signature model for Helena, who favored exotic types. Azabache's first collection featured the heretofore lowly muslin, dyed in such vivid colors as maroon, aqua, fuchsia, red and orange. At one time, Electrika crocheted shawls and dyed them in these same colors. Fashion icon Chona Kasten bought several pieces.

Helena's clothes had Armani's tailoring, Versace's ebullient colors, and Kenzo's layered, patterned, cottons that swung to life. But the woman's own artistry shone through, says Electrika.

Way before Shanghai Tang, Azabache introduced Mandarin-collar shirts and Chinese slippers in neon colors. Then came silk separates with vivid embroideries and drawings by Helena's artist-brother, Ernesto. The gingham collection infused with animal embroidery was another sellout.

In the '70s, when attention was being called to the low hemline of '50s fashion, Azabache exposed the shoulders instead. It revived bustiers and introduced tube dresses with mesh in the back.

Another phase was dedicated to layers of transparent tutus. This "ballerina look" finally caught on only in the past two years. For a touch of nationalism, Azabache introduced its own version of the butterfly-sleeved *kimona* paired with bloomers!

Electrika recalls that for the finale of a fashion show at the now-defunct Plaza restaurant, she floated down the runway with nothing but a multi-layered tulle skirt. Going topless was unheard of until then. When she was pregnant with her first daughter, who is now MTV VJ Sarah Meier, Electrika was still modeling Azabache's maillots.

Another trademark

The Indian collection is another of Azabache's trademark styles. It consisted of Nehru suits, *sari* designs, jodhpurs and dhotis, kurtas and pajamas.

"Helena never copied," recalls Electrika. "If ever she borrowed an idea, she made it better and more functional than the original."

Helena expressed herself through the clothes and makeup she wore. After her visits to India, she frequently wore tunics and slim pants in Indian white or black–which nearly nobody wears in that subcontinent. Although she was blonde and had alabaster skin, she adapted the look of the Indian women. She sported a nose ring 20 years before the dawn of the body-piercing fad. She lined her eyes with *kajal*, an herbal eyeliner. For contrast, she wore white foundation.

Helena's entrances to parties were always dramatic. In one theme party, she dressed up as a *maja* shrouded by a lace *mantilla* that cascaded from the giant comb. She arrived once wearing a hoop gown, with two holes from which young daughters peeped out.

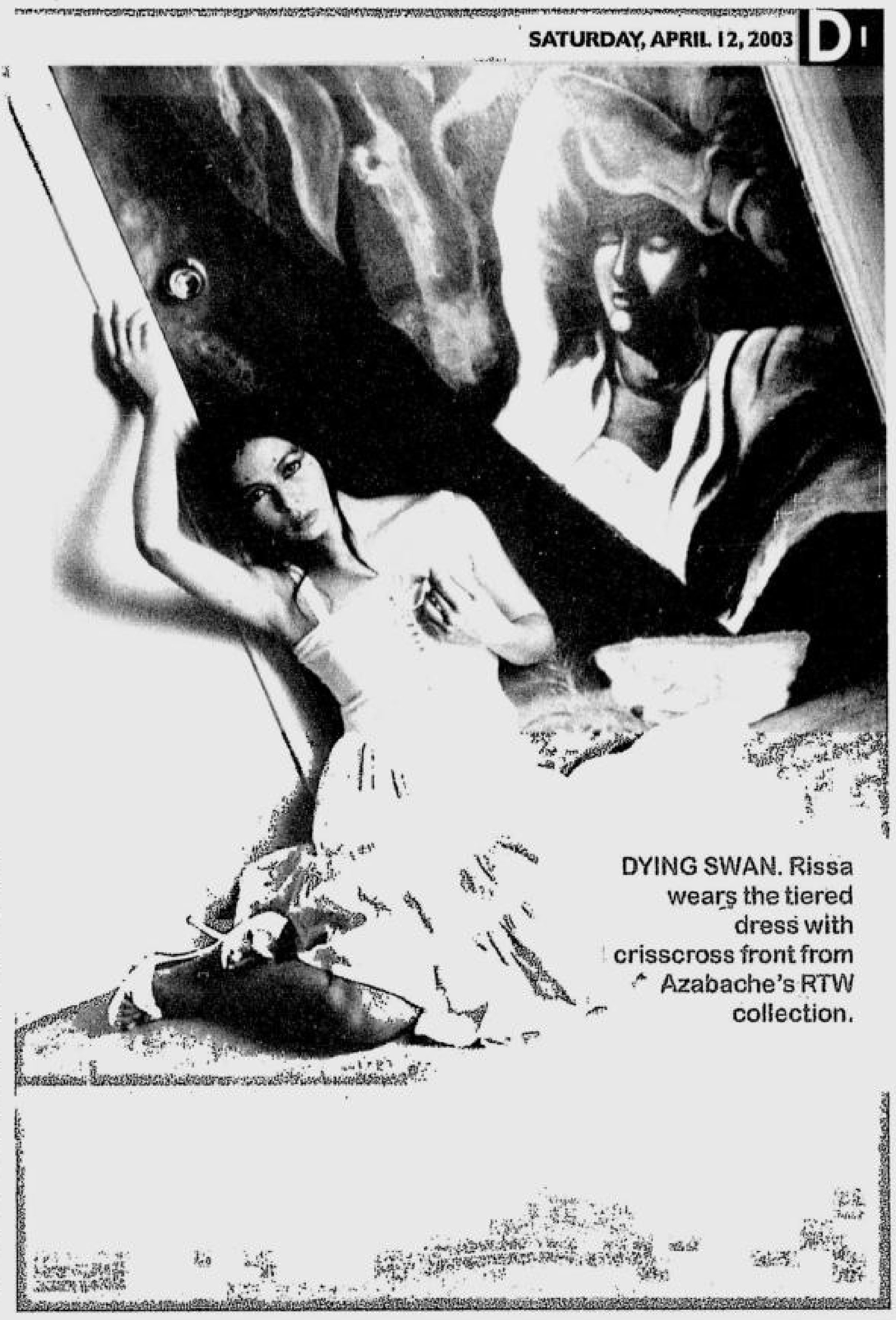
Helena's personal style was unconventional, yet it exuded an authoritative air. Says Electrika, "She never looked like a fool. In fact, she made a statement: 'I'm a *fashionista*; I don't have to try hard.'" People would gasp in awe at her bravado. One simply never heard backstabs or nasty comments about Helena's style.

Helena was said to be ambitious to the point of bringing her fashion collection to New York. Whether that show did her career in or not, is still a big question today. Azabache folded up in the early '80s, just after Helena and her husband split up. Helena proceeded to run a successful restaurant in New York, but eventually sold it.

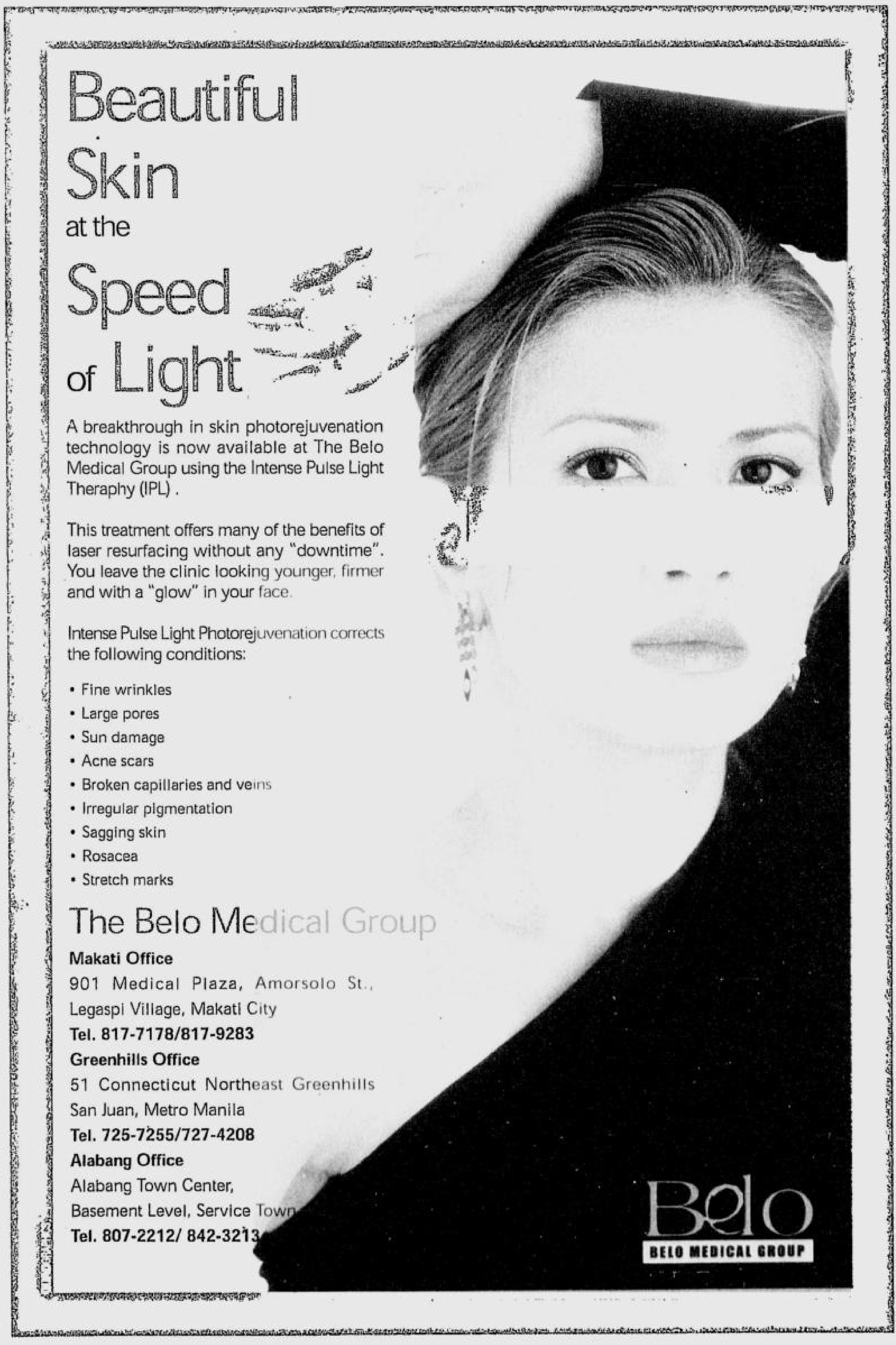
The fashion scene that Helena played as an instrument to make her own kind of music is all but forgotten. But for those who understand quality and individuality, her aura lingers.

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE D2

As the spirit of Azabache –that audacious clothes line in the mid '70s–Helena Guerrero was a startling original, unparalleled to this day



DYING SWAN. Rissa wears the tiered dress with crisscross front from Azabache's RTW collection.



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HAIR AND MAKEUP: ERIC MANINGAT AND FRANCES ZULUETA FOR SHU UEMURA
CLOTHES: VINTAGE AZABACHE FROM MARY ANN TINIO'S COLLECTION
LOCATION: MORITA'S RESTAURANT
CASKETS: ELENA ROCES

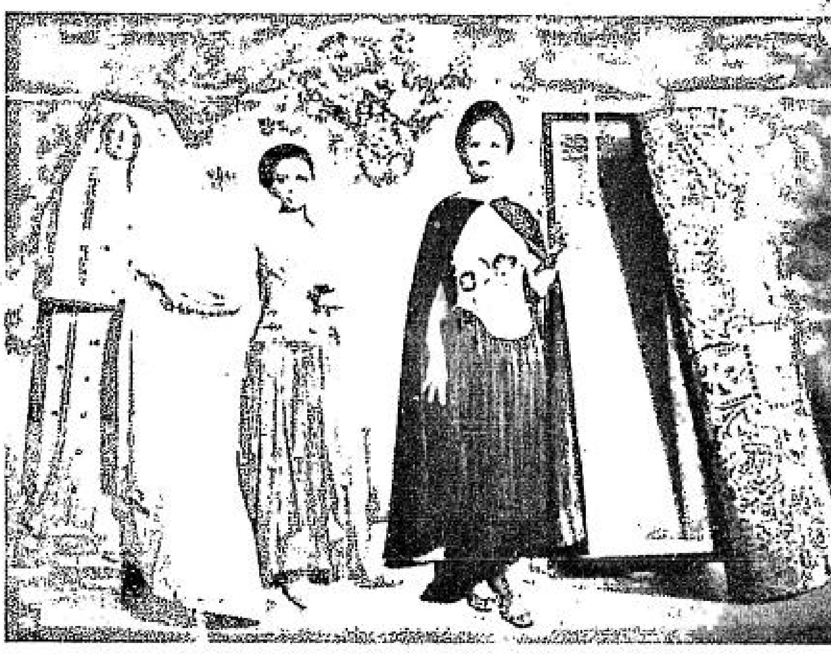
SCREAMGIRLS. Electrika wears a black jacket with gold leaf appliqué, and Indian-inspired pants. On Rissa, a classic asymmetrical top with ruching and diaper pants.

ROCK ME, RAJA! Electrika dons the Nehru top and jodhpur pants, popularized by Azabache 20 years ago.

One true thing

Photos by Wig Tysmans
Pictorial direction by Antonio Salac Santos

From page D1



TULLE DEATH DO US PART. Rissa and Electrika step out into the night in bustier gowns with tulle skirts and dramatic capes.

CAPE FEAR. Classic leather bustier dress, made especially for Mary Ann Tinio by Azabache and worn with a reversible cape.

FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS. Mary Ann and Rissa slither in silk tops with fish scale designs.

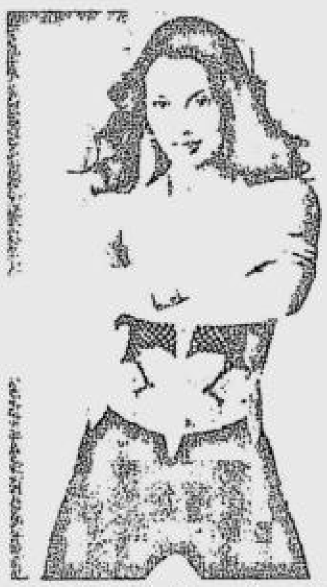
Seeing a future in homegrown labels

By Harriet Ann Dy
Contributor

IN an era when "permanent discounts" is fast becoming a retail trend, it seems that fashion executive Sheree Roxas-Chua Gotuaco picked just the right time to, well, go Solo.

"I wanted to penetrate the lower-end market," Gotuaco says, and also because she was bent on establishing a foothold on malls in provincial capitals where, understandably, "lower price points are more attractive." No surprise though, that when Solo opened its doors last Christmas, it also embraced shoppers in Abanao Square in Baguio and Robinson's Place in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

In the United States, a tough economy and a new shopper profile used to discounts are just two factors that have further slowed down the retail business. "If it's not marked down," writes New York Times reporter Tracie Rozhon, "America's shoppers are telling merchandise to forget it."


GISELLE Töngi's spunk makes her the best spokesperson for Freeway.

Locally, the ubiquity of such cheap chic chains as Anonymous and Human have successfully married "steal" and style. Solo's concept brief promises to "carry only items below P500" while still guaranteeing "standout" apparel and gift items.

No greenhorn in the fashion business, Solo is actually the fourth retail label of the family-owned Elite Garments International. Other local house brands include Twenty-Two B.C., Ensembles and Freeway.

Introducing mix and match

Quite appropriately, Solo also marks Gotuaco's 10th year in the business, rising from assistant vice-president to her current role as chief operating officer. From overseeing operations of both local and export business, she is now tasked with ensuring the 50-year-old company's growth in the next five years.

A magna cum laude marketing and management graduate from the University of Southern California, Gotuaco went on to earn a Professional Degree in Fashion Design from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles.

She started Ensembles a few months after she came back home because she felt there wasn't much choice for career wear in terms of combining separates at that time. Creaseless clothing was born; and Gotuaco came up with appropriate marketing and merchandising strategies and, until three years ago, designed collections for the label.

In 1995, she went for the young urbanite with the creation of Freeway. By far the most profitable among the house brands, the teen-oriented label has also consistently made the top 20 percent in local ladies' apparel, according to several mall managers. The company recently put a face to the brand by signing up actress Giselle Töngi (she dropped the "e" and adapted the Swiss spelling) as exclusive image model.

Töngi has recently graced the billboards. Asked the effectivity of billboard advertising, Gotuaco replies, "Store traffic has risen from 50 to 100 percent in our outlets, depending on which outlet."

And how influential is an image model?

In terms of sales, it is hard to gauge since G.Töngi will still be launched as the image model in May. "I will have a better idea by third quarter of this year," she says.

Irony

"We have one designer for every label," Gotuaco says. "Design planning is done twice a month for Twenty Two B.C. and once a week for Ensembles and Freeway. All designers work with their own merchandising teams."

Needless to say, Gotuaco oversees overall design direction for the brands. "Because of its trendy nature, Freeway has the most leeway, design-wise," she says.

Aside from steering local labels towards the right direction, Gotuaco is also keeping a steady eye on what her parents have developed as a garment exporters.

"My export and local departments function almost independently of one another in terms of marketing and merchandising," she says. "But there is also a synergy in terms of shared costs in some aspects like delivery, accounting, production and HR."

She describes the export side as more mathematical and systematic, as opposed to the local aspect, where creativity is "a must." At present, exports account for 55 percent of the total business.

But a big irony is that an export-oriented company like Elite now also needs to import clothing to meet local demands for cost-effective garments.

"Unfortunately, the Philippines is not very competitive in terms of garment manufacturing costs," she observes. "Some of our garments are designed in Manila, sampled in Hong Kong, and produced in China." Almost all of Twenty Two B.C.'s inventory and around half of Ensembles' are manufactured locally, though.

Gotuaco offers: "You may ask, if we export, why do we still outsource for our local market? Interestingly, Hong Kong or China can accept smaller orders and have access to better fabrics. If we produce for our buyers, we would need to make at least 3,000 pieces per design, to meet the minimum quantity required by fabric mills in Korea and other Asian countries."

Sadly, outsourcing is not a new phenomenon among local apparel retailers.

Like her North American counterparts, this Filipina has become a really smart shopper in search of the best deals around. "Good price and good quality," Gotuaco intones. More options, too.

The good news is, despite a tough economy, all three Elite labels broke record sales and registered positive sales growth last year, says Gotuaco. The bad news is, on the export end, the country's quota benefit expires in 2005.

SOLO, a young and sporty unisex line, uses foreign models to give the brand a classy image.

Sheree Ro ınu /hose
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Inte natio a ands
Twent ·T\ ıble' and
Fı Solo

Unless local exporters become more competitive, the local industry will lose a lot of business to China.

"(This is why) I am 'growing' local labels," Gotuaco stresses. "I am focused on creating a good image and merchandise mix while being cost-efficient. On the export end, I would like to maintain our good reputation."

Final question: Is she a Twenty Two B.C. , Ensembles (classic dressing) or Freeway (young and trendy) customer?

Confession: "I would be a mix between Ensembles and Freeway."

(Email the author at chinachix@hotmail.com)

The Blue Peel pause

This new chemical treatment developed by Zein Obagi can take years off your face in only 30 minutes

BEFORE

AFTER

IF Michelle Pfeiffer, 46, and Meg Ryan, 41, look younger these days, it's because they've just undergone the Blue Peel treatment.

The chemical peel is an alternative to the facelift. When one reaches age 30, the skin cells start slowing down in their task of producing elastin and collagen, the two substances that keep the skin supple. Wrinkles and large pores thus start appearing. Effects of previous sun exposures and current hormonal conditions become manifest, and the skin deteriorates. After age 40, crow's feet deepen, eyelids and eyebags become heavier, the skin sags over the lower jaw to form jowls. Brown spots and blotches threaten to never go away.

To prevent further skin degeneration at this point, Beverly Hills-based dermatologist Zein Obagi (pronounced oba-jee), recommends a deep chemical peel that can lighten the skin and improve the skin texture.

Getting a chemical peel is not unlike visiting the aesthetician for a facial. Obagi says the results depend on the thickness, color and consistency of the patient's skin, the various agents used, and the dermatologist's skill.

He says most creams and moisturizers work only on the skin's surface and do not alter the skin's function. The Blue Peel, which he developed, penetrates the deeper layers of the skin to stimulate the cells that produce elastin and collagen. The formulation of the peel depends on the characteristics of the patient's skin. "It can be dark, light, oily, combination, or dry, fragile or tough," Obagi says.

Precise procedure

In an interview with the magazine, The Art of Cosmetic Beauty, Obagi explains that treatments to facilitate elastin growth need to hit a specific level of the skin–the immediate reticular dermis (IRD). Otherwise, the peel will have a superficial and short-term effect. If it goes too deep, on the other hand, it could cause permanent scarring.

The Blue Peel consists of 15 percent tricholorcetic acid, the exfoliating agent, combined with a base compound to help the skin absorb it to the accurate depth. The blue color was included to help the dermatologist know the exact amount of cream applied and to guarante if it was applied correctly.

"We fixed it at a low concentration, measuring exactly how much solution was needed. Then the physician can use a coat system," Obugi says. "A first coat of between four and five millimeters is applied, followed by a second coat of the same thickness. Most skin types require three coats in order to reach the IRD. If only two coats are applied, there will be no change."

The patient is required to fast for six hours, and undergoes sedation while the 30-minute procedure is performed. Afterwards he or she is advised to stay home from a week to 10 days–or risk being mistaken for a bomb victim from Basra.

During the healing time, the skin sports a bluish tint. The peel, together with thin surface layers of damaged or aged skin, is washed away with frequent reapplication of a compress, cortisone cream for the inflammation, and an Obagi moisturizer.

"While the actual peel is being performed, there will also be a stinging or burning sensation which is tolerable," Obagi says. "But there should not be any more pain during the healing phase. The skin peels by sealing the nerve endings."

After the downtime, the patient can resume regular activities, and need not fear sun exposure–provided there's protection. By then, layers of dead skin cells have been exfoliated and replaced with healthier ones, allowing the new skin's clarity and elasticity to resurface.

Aside from diminishing wrinkles, pigmentation, sun damage, acne scars and large pores, the Blue Peel also firms up sagging facial muscles. The doctor says a patient may fully benefit from one procedure. "If the improvement is not as much as hoped for, it can be done two or three times more until the skin reaches its optimum state, and then once every two years to maintain it," he says.

To get accurate results from this procedure, Obagi advises that patients should consult an experienced physician to assess their skin type. In the Philippines, the Belo Medical Clinic exclusively offers the Blue Peel.

"The physician needs to have a sound knowledge of the individual skin and patient management and a basic knowledge of the skin in general," Obagi says.

Mod

COMPANY presidents and CEOs have the authority to hire and fire, but who would want to enlist them as models, unless they look like Colin Farrell or Giselle Bundchen?

This was the concept of Philippine Fashion Week's "The Power Generation" forecast, held at the Hotel InterContinental. The show was sponsored by Sony Ericsson and directed by Joey Espino of Runway Productions. Petite Anna Periquet, president of Aurelio Periquet Jr. Foundation, twisted the arms of her friends, mostly scions and head honchos, to strut down the ramp suited in Hugo Boss and Liz Claiborne. They didn't have any jitters, as seen in these photos taken backstage.

Believe it or not, the perfect endorsers for fashion are real people rather than young and nubile models. Customers realize that the clothes they see are meant for people with not-so-perfect proportions. Real people as models has been the trend in the United States for over a decade, and the Philippines is finally catching up.

WARREN Sy, president of ADM

JOE Hagedorn, partner, Hagedorn Group of Companies

Sharon Tan of IBM Philippines

CELINE Madamba, INQUIRER's corporate relations manager, and Mia Florencio, president of Technomarine

BUTCH Jimenez, PLDT vice-president for corporate and communcations

[illegible] BY
[illegible] VECINA

ANNA Periquet

Staying ahead of the pack

DESPITE our Third World going on Fourth status, the Philippines is one of the biggest markets for mobile phones. For years this market has been dominated by a Finnish brand. Sony Ericsson beat the competition by being the first to launch the much-talked about P800 model which includes a personal digital assistant (PDA), an audio-video player and camera with which you could add sound clips and create postcards. Right now it's the only model that can identify the owner's handwriting. During Fashion Week, Patrick E.S. Larraga, Sony Ericsson's marketing manager, showed how the P800 could provide nonstop entertainment and business right in the palm of one's hand.

An ELECTRIFYING SUMMER FUN only at EVER GOTESCO MALLS

A-month-and-a-half long celebration loaded with tons of fun and an array of activities for the entire family.

Mom, ain't it super hot this Summer? Beat this heat by availing the **"Electrifying Summer Fan Promo"** from **April 14 to May 15, 2003.** For a minimum purchase of Php400.00 (single or accumulated) made from any store at Ever Gotesco Malls you'll get the chance to have a Super Windy Stand Fan for the whole family for only Php499.00. As the whole family enjoys shopping at Ever Gotesco Malls, they too can indulge with a **FREE Nestle Ice Cream** through the **Shopping N' Ice Cream Promo.** Just a minimum purchase of Php500.00 (single receipt) made only from Ever Supermarket and Ever Department Store entitles you to a FREE Merienda Time Ice Cream from Nestle. So, shop for more so that every member of the family gets to have a Free Ice Cream on April 19-20; 25-27 and May 2-4; 9-11, 2003.

After that cool treat from Nestle, male genders of the family will surely sweat to the heat that the **Klasbabes** of ABS CBN will bring to Ever Gotesco Malls. Dad, Uncle and Kuya even Lolo must not let the **"Hot Stars sa Ever"** opportunity pass by on April 27, 4pm at Ever Gotesco Commonwealth and on May 10, 4pm at Ever Gotesco Ortigas. It's the girls' turn! Ever Gotesco Malls offer Mom, Aunt and Ate an undeniably perfect venue as Lola watches you hone your talents in singing, acting and dancing - **The Ever Summer Camp.** This is where Philmarts conducts summer workshops at Ever Gotesco Commonwealth on April 9,14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30 and May 2 and at Ever Gotesco Ortigas on April 22, 24, 29 and May 1, 6, 8, 9.

Of course, Ever Gotesco Malls cannot afford not to remember the little ones in the family. An atmosphere of a kiddie summer land awaits the Kidos as Nestle Mascots with exciting giveaways parade around the Malls during weekends from April 14 to May 15. That's why "mga bulilits" have a **Weekend Parade with Nestle at Ever.**

Summer has always been the season when the family gets to look for a real fun get-away. For this summer, Ever Gotesco Malls made it sure that shoppers will have no other choice but to have their families spend this season only at Ever Gotesco Malls with their ***"ELECTRIFYING SUMMER FUN" CAMPAIGN*** *from* ***April 14 to May 31, 2003.***

Now, it's time to stretch your muscles and burn those fats! Everyone in the family, grab a friend or two at Ever Gotesco Ortigas during the months of April and May. As Body Heat Fitness Center shares the following disciplines: **Aeroboxing** during Thursdays at 7pm; **Taekwondo**, Saturdays at 10am and Karate on Sundays at 10am. So, let us all **"Be Fit with Body Heat".** Had enough? Here's more! Ever Gotesco Malls will not let the family go home without a sizzling entertainment from Nestle. Be part of the **Nestle Summer Tour** on May 3, 4pm at Ever Gotesco Commonwealth and on May 17, 4pm at Ever Gotesco Ortigas for an afternoon delight.

Indeed, summer get-aways need not be very far from home... 'coz Ever Gotesco Malls' summer activities only intends to bestow ***AN ELECTRIFYING SUMMER FUN*** *experience to all.*

ADVT.

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EVER ORTIGAS, Mall Atrium 2
April 20 - Jimboy Clowns
April 26 & 27 - Skippy's Amazing World

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Texas Chicken

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Colin Farrell rings up US box-office honors

By Dean Goodman

LOS ANGELES—Irish actor Colin Farrell, one of the hottest new stars in Hollywood, dialed his third consecutive No. 1 movie at the North American box office last Sunday as the thriller "Phone Booth" finally reached theaters almost five months behind schedule.

Publicist

"Phone Booth" rang up $15 million in ticket sales in its first three days, according to studio estimates. Farrell plays a New York publicist who picks up a ringing telephone in a phone booth only to learn that he is in the sights of a sniper.

The movie, which cost a modest $13 million, was pulled from its original Nov. 15 berth because real-life snipers were terrorizing the Washington D.C. area at the time.

"Considering the journey this picture has taken, I'm just totally delighted with this result," said Bruce Snyder, president of distribution at the film's producer, Twentieth Century Fox.

Outspoken

Farrell topped the box office twice in February with "The Recruit" and "Daredevil," thereby giving "Phone Booth" some visibility that it may not have had five months ago. Also in that time, the outspoken 26-year-old Dublin native has become a staple of the gossip pages.

The film also marks a comeback for director Joel Schumacher, whose career hit a slow patch after his disappointing "Batman & Robin" movie killed off the lucrative franchise in 1997.

Fox is a unit of News Corp.'s Fox Entertainment Group Inc .

Distractions

Overall box-office sales slipped for the fourth consecutive weekend on a year-on-year basis, according to data from tracking firm Exhibitor Relations Co. The top 12 movies grossed $84 million, down 10 percent from last year and down three percentage points from last weekend. Industry observers continued to blame distractions of the Iraqi war.

Last weekend's champion, the urban White House comedy "Head of State" fell to No. 4 with $8.8 million. The film, marking the directing debut of its star, Chris Rock, who plays the first black U.S. president, has tallied $25.3 million after two weekends. The $35 million production was released by privately held DreamWorks SKG.

Newcomers also grabbed the Nos. 2 and 3 slots. The teen

COLIN/ E2

FARRELL. Stars in his third consecutive No. 1 movie. AP

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NGC airs 'Surviving Everest' on April 27

By Edmund L. Sicam

MENTION Mount Everest and the name that comes to mind is Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb the tallest peak (29,035 feet) in the world on May 29, 1953. He shared the honor with Tenzing Norgay Sherpa.

Not too many people know, however, that his son Peter Hillary duplicated this feat in 1990, making them the first father and son to reach the summit. In 1963, five Americans, including National Geographic's Barry Bishop, became the first US nationals to reach the top.

Historic climb

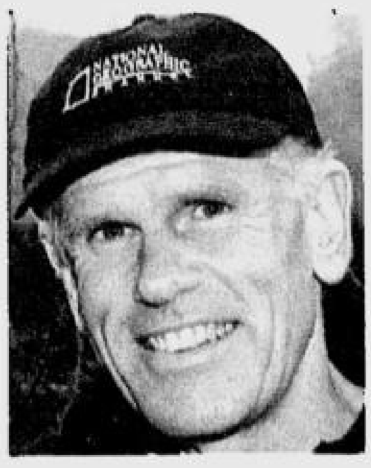
Last year, to commemorate the golden anniversary of that historic climb in 1953, National Geographic invited Peter Hillary, Jamling Tenzing Norgay and Brent Bishop, sons of the Everest pioneers, to retrace the steps of their fathers. That expedition is the subject of a documentary "Surviving Everest" that airs on April 27 at 8 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel.

Recently I had the rare opportunity to interview Peter Hillary by phone at the local offices of the Star TV network. One of my first questions was whether he planned to conquer Mt. Everest a third time. The younger Hillary said that he had no intention to make the climb again.

"I thought climbing Everest once was enough. I've been on over 38 expeditions to mountains around the world and I've skied to the South Pole. When National Geographic came along, I changed my mind. It just sounded fantastic! When they said that Tenzing and Bishop would be there, it was just too much to let it go."

But aside from this nostalgic aspect, Hillary was excited that the contribution of the Sherpas would be highlighted in the docu. "We had a lot of old friends amongst these people but, importantly to me, the film was really going to show the input of the Sherpas, the Nepalese people living around the foot of Mt. Everest."

We asked Hillary how it felt to be on top of the highest peak in the world. "It's a whole mixture of feelings when you get up there. One is jubilation. Another feeling you have is, 'Thank God I've got there, now I can go down!' Another is awe."



HILLARY. Fear makes you good at what you're doing.

JAMLING Norgay, Brent Bishop and Peter Hillary prepare to conquer Mt. Everest.

Emotional

For his second climb, Hillary said that he felt very emotional when he reached the summit, particularly because he was there to celebrate the anniversary of the climb made by his father and Tenzing. Hillary shared that, as soon as he got to the peak, he took out his satellite phone and called up his wife.

"I said, 'We're here, we've been here for 40 minutes . . .' and she wouldn't talk to me! She said, 'Your father's at home and he's worried, so you better call him right away!" So Hillary called his dad and they talked about the climb.

The expedition almost turned tragic. Hillary shared that the group nearly lost two cameramen when there was a major collapse in the ice. "It was a miracle they weren't crushed by the huge blocks of ice that collapsed beneath us. That was a very frightening moment. I pretty much decided I wasn't going to go back up again!"

Hillary and his companions were greatly affected by this but, after a while, they decided to push through.

Sense of fear

Although he was a veteran of numerous expeditions, Hillary admitted that he still had a sense of fear whenever he went on a new adventure. However, Hillary said that one must always have the bigger picture in mind. "The storm will blow over if you just hang on, and then everything will be alright."

Hillary observed that you cannot just decide to climb Mt. Everest. You should climb other mountains first as training, for 10 years or so! The adventurer told me that he had been climbing mountains since he was 15.

Teamwork

For Hillary, the most important thing about climbing a big mountain is teamwork. "It was something that my father stressed to me about his climb with Tenzing Norgay. They were a team, they were on the road together. That was a critical part of their climbing success. And so it was with us, we were a team."

This is another thing that Hillary, who is in great demand as a motivational speaker, finds important in life: "I think all of us should try to contribute something to others, other than just our families—you know, to the community. These days, that is not necessarily the community or city in which you live, or even the country in which you live. It can be in another country, and it's certainly what my family has done."

Himalayan Trust

Sir Edward Hillary put up the Himalayan Trust, which assists the people in the Mount Everest region.

The younger Hillary is now very active in this organization, which has built and run 42 schools, hospitals and medical clinics. "Obviously, we have to look after our families, develop our own careers, make a good living and have our own challenges, our own sports and leisure activities—but giving to others is an important part of that balance," he shares.

MCCARTNEY. His new touring show pretty much sums up his whole career.

Paul McCartney schedules more concerts

LONDON—Beatles fans recently received a double treat with announcements of a new world tour by Paul McCartney and the release of a DVD of a 1994 jam session by McCartney, Ringo Starr and George Harrison.

Large package

McCartney said he plans to include a large package of Beatles songs in his first British tour in a decade, scheduling 22 songs from his Fab Four days for each two-and-a-half hour arena concert.

Seven dates in April have been announced for the "Back in the World" tour, including stops in London and in Manchester, northern England. McCartney then plans to tour France, Spain, Germany and Scandinavia.

The world tour follows McCartney's successful 2002 "Back In The US" tour—a series of performances that brought him Billboard magazine's Tour Of The Year prize.

"I had a lot of fun touring this show around America last year, but now I'm bringing it home, and that's special to me as I always look forward to playing to a home crowd," McCartney said in a statement.

He said he has learned to give audiences what they want.

"So that means we'll be playing some of my Beatles stuff—rather a lot of Beatles stuff, actually—some Wings stuff and some more recent stuff. So basically the show pretty much spans my whole career," he said.

McCartney said he would give some Beatles classics a contemporary twist. "There are a couple of numbers that I hope we might be able to reinvent," he said.

Tickets for the concerts go on sale at 35 to 45 pounds ($56 to $72).

Reunion performance

Fans also will be able to purchase a DVD of the reunion performance by McCartney, Starr and Harrison that was filmed in 1994. It was the only time the three played together after the band split up in 1970.

Harrison died in November 2001, after a long battle with cancer. John Lennon, the fourth Beatle, was shot dead in New York in 1980.

The hour-long DVD was shot at Harrison's studios at his mansion in Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. The songs are mainly staples from their early performing days, including "Blue Moon Of Kentucky," "Ain't She Sweet" and "Thinking of Linking."

A spokesman for McCartney told the British Broadcasting Corp. that the jam session was "really sweet. It's five old songs that they would have played in the days before the Beatles. It's really nice footage." *AP*

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Colin Farrell rings up

From page E1

comedy "What A Girl Wants," starring kids TV staple Amanda Bynes, nabbed $12.1 million, while the Vin Diesel drugs drama "A Man Apart" opened with $11.2 million.

Target demographic

"What a Girl Wants," in which 17-year-old Bynes plays the long-lost American daughter of a British peer, played strongly to its target demographic of girls and young women, said Dan Fellman, president of distribution at Warner Bros. It was budgeted in the $20 million range.

"A Man Apart," which Diesel finished in early 2001 long before vaulting to international stardom last summer with "XXX," revolves around the drugs trade in Los Angeles and Tijuana. It performed according to expectations, said a spokesman at New Line Cinema. Both Warner Bros. and New Line are units of AOL Time Warner Inc.

Steve Martin former No. 1 comedy "Bringing Down the House" rounded out the top five with $8.5 million, and a five-weekend total of $111.3 million. It was released by Touchstone Pictures, a unit of Walt Disney Co.

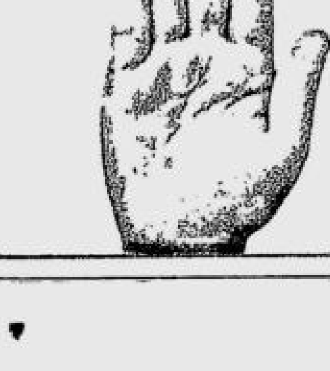
The two other movies that opened last weekend did not show much staying power, each losing about half of their audience. "The Core," in which the heroes must journey to the center of the earth to save the planet, fell three places to No. 6 with $6.3 million and a 10-day total of $20.9 million. The $60 million film was released by Viacom Inc.'s Paramount Pictures.

FARRELL as Bullseye in "Daredevil."

Military thriller

The John Travolta military thriller "Basic" followed at No. 7, also down three places, with $5.4 million for the weekend and $20 million for the 10 days. Sony Corp's Columbia Pictures paid producer Intermedia Films $19 million for distribution rights in North America and Japan. Intermedia is a unit of Germany's Internationalmedia AG.

New releases next weekend include "Anger Management," a comedy teaming Adam Sandler and Jack Nicholson; and "House of 1,000 Corpses," a violent horror movie directed more than two years ago by rock star Rob Zombie. *Reuters*



No hurt feelings, promise!

Nick Nolte comes clean about staying clean

NOLTE. "I'm not a fan of real life." AP

By Jill Serjeant

LOS ANGELES—Nick Nolte decided years ago that, when it came to the press, "the best approach to talking about my personal life was to lie." But there was no hiding when he got himself arrested "dazed and drooling" last September after an erratic drive down the Malibu coast and had his dishevelled, wild-haired mug shot plastered on newspapers around the world.

Candid introspection

There is something refreshing about Nolte's world-weariness these days, his candid introspection, his struggle to cope with "real life," his impatience with playing the Hollywood game.

"I've always said I had substance abuse problems. It is something you deal with and you take care of it and you keep it under control.

"Every once in a while, you lose it. You saw my pictures. There's no hiding there," the gravel-voiced actor said wryly.

No-contest plea

Nolte checked himself immediately into a rehab facility after his arrest, which ended with a no-contest plea to driving under the influence of drugs, three years probation and an order to attend drunk-driving classes.

Nolte spent 28 days in an East Coast clinic, where "you get very humble, you learn to wash your underwear.

"Now the trick is not to relapse. And that's a matter of being vigilant. It's like having a disease. If you had a cancer on your skin and they burned it off, you'd wash it and clean it everyday," the two-time Oscar nominee said in an interview.

Six months on, Nolte looks a changed man. The manic hair from the famous police photo is cut short, the Hawaiian shirt replaced by a dark shirt and a stylish black leather coat.

He sips hungrily from a coffee mug, asks permission to smoke and reflects that an actor "has really no choice but to play himself." His character, Bob, in his latest movie "The Good Thief," comes closer than most.

Nolte plays a lovable loser with a romantic streak who drinks, gambles and shoots up heroin in the seedy twilight zone of the Nice underworld before taking on one last casino heist that might redeem his battered fortunes.

Inconsiderate oaf

As a former hellraiser himself who was once told by Katharine Hepburn that he was an "inconsiderate oaf who's been drunk in every gutter in town," it wasn't much of stretch.

"I've lived that life. Apart from the heroin. So there's a bit of Bob, a bit of me. We're both getting older and have a bit of trouble functioning," Nolte said.

Nolte's 25-year career has spanned box-office hits like "The Deep" and comedies such as "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" to the romantic "Prince of Tides" and "Lorenzo's Oil."

But in the last 10 years he has shied away from Hollywood blockbusters for smaller, independent movies that better suit his own preoccupations.

"I'm, er, 62 . . . I think. I've lied so many years. I always bumped it up. When I was 40, I said I was 50, But now that I'm 60, I don't want to try to bump it up to 70," he laughed.

"So I'm attracted to films that deal with what my psyche is going through . . ., not the big studio films that have a target audience of 14 or 12. I can't get that." Nolte says acting gives him more pleasure now than it did when he found fame in the 1976 TV mini-series "Rich Man, Poor Man" and went on to become one of Hollywood's best-known leading men.

Tall stories

He also became a notorious spinner of tall stories: That he was 15 when he learned to read, that his first (of three) wives was a trapeze artist in a circus and that he lived for a while in a Mexican whorehouse.

Real life, like fame, is something he has a problem with.

"I'm not a fan of real life. Real life has got some strange rules to it that are very odd . . . I'm shy, so socialization is a difficult thing. I'm not comfortable with a lot of people I don't know. I'm not good on the weather," he said.

"When you have a success it elevates you to another plain and then they put a lot of money on the table, saying 'do the same thing again.' And I thought, I can't do that."

Nolte shares an affinity for gambling and poker with his "Good Thief" character Bob, who does eventually enjoy a stroke of luck that leads to personal redemption. *Reuters*

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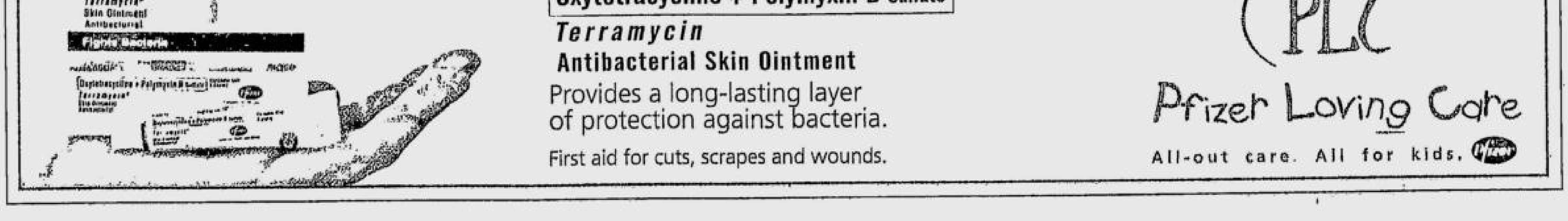

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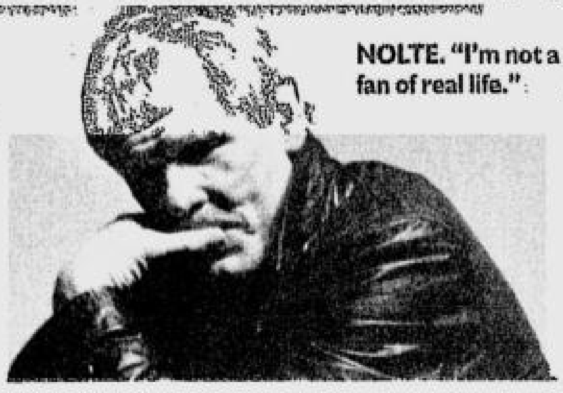
Nick Nolte comes clean about staying clean


NOLTE. "I'm not a fan of real life." AP

By Jill Serjeant

LOS ANGELES—Nick Nolte decided years ago that, when it came to the press, "the best approach to talking about my personal life was to lie." But there was no hiding when he got himself arrested "dazed and drooling" last September after an erratic drive down the Malibu coast and had his dishevelled, wild-haired mug shot plastered on newspapers around the world.

Candid introspection

There is something refreshing about Nolte's world-weariness these days, his candid introspection, his struggle to cope with "real life," his impatience with playing the Hollywood game.

"I've always said I had substance abuse problems. It is something you deal with and you take care of it and you keep it under control.

"Every once in a while, you lose it. You saw my pictures. There's no hiding there," the gravel-voiced actor said wryly.

No-contest plea

Nolte checked himself immediately into a rehab facility after his arrest, which ended with a no-contest plea to driving under the influence of drugs, three years probation and an order to attend drunk-driving classes.

Nolte spent 28 days in an East Coast clinic, where "you get very humble, you learn to wash your underwear.

"Now the trick is not to relapse. And that's a matter of being vigilant. It's like having a disease. If you had a cancer on your skin and they burned it off, you'd wash it and clean it everyday," the two-time Oscar nominee said in an interview.

Six months on, Nolte looks a changed man. The manic hair from the famous police photo is cut short, the Hawaiian shirt replaced by a dark shirt and a stylish black leather coat.

He sips hungrily from a coffee mug, [illegible] permission to smoke and reflects that an actor "has really no choice but to play himself." His character, Bob [illegible] latest movie "The Good Thief," comes [illegible] than most.

Nolte plays a lovable loser with a [illegible] streak who drinks, gambles and shoots heroin in the seedy twilight zone of the Nice underworld before taking on one last casino heist that might redeem his battered fortunes.

Inconsiderate oaf

As a former hellraiser himself who was once told by Katharine Hepburn that he was an "inconsiderate oaf who's been drunk in every gutter in town," it wasn't much of stretch.

"I've lived that life. Apart from the heroin. So there's a bit of Bob, a bit of me. We're both getting older and have a bit of trouble functioning," Nolte said.

Nolte's 25-year ca[illegible] panned [illegible] hits like "The Deep" and comedies such as "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" [illegible] the romantic "Prince of Tides" and "Lorenzo's Oil."

But in the last 10 years he has shied away from Hollywood blockbusters for smaller independent movies that better suit his preoccupations.

"I'm, er, 62 [illegible] thing. I've lied so many years. I always bumped it up. When I was 40 I said I was 50. But now that I'm 60, I don't want to try to bump it up to 70," he laughed.

"So I'm attracted to films that deal with what my psyche is going through [illegible] not the big studio films that have a target audience of 14 or 12. I can't get that." Nolte says acting gives him more pleasure now than it did when he found fame in the 1976 TV mini-series "Rich Man, Poor Man" and went on to become one of Hollywood's best-known leading men.

Tall stories

He also became a notorious spinner of tall stories: That he was 15 when he learned to read, that his first (of three) wives was a trapeze artist in a circus and that he lived for a while in a Mexican whorehouse.

Real life, like fame, [illegible] somethin[illegible] problem with.

"I'm not a fan of real life. Real life has some strange rules to it that are very odd. I'm shy, so socialization is a difficult thing. I'm not comfortable with a lot of people I don't know, I'm not good [illegible] rather," he said.

"When you have success [illegible] it elevates you to another plain and then they put a lot of money on the table saying, 'do the same thing again.' And I thought, I can't do that."

Nolte shares an affinity for gambling and poker with his "Good Thief" character Bob, who does eventually enjoy a stroke of luck that leads to personal redemption. *Reuters*

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These stars redefined sex appeal on film

Nestor U. Torre

THESE days on the local film front, starlets become sexy stars practically overnight. Unfortunately, if all they have going for them is sexual daring or gumption, after they've bared it all in their first starring vehicle, they never get to topbill another film.

Flourishing careers

Compare that to the flourishing careers of past sexy stars in the United States and Europe, and you get a clear idea of the lack of long-range vision on the part of many local sex-flick producers.

They discover "new" beauties who turn out to have a shady past, and all-too-brief present, and a nonexistent future—unlike the famous likes of Brigitte Bardot, Sophia Loren and Marilyn Monroe.

These three stars started their careers as sex kittens, but went on to develop other aspects of their personality or screen persona.

Brigitte Bardot was spotted by director Roger Vadim on the cover of Elle magazine, and she married him in 1952. In his directorial debut, "And God Created Woman" (1956), she launched a new "girlishly erotic" look that redefined sex appeal in the movies, and launched many imitators.

Nonchalant attitude

Brigitte's nonchalant attitude towards nudity and her seemingly uninhibited sensuality made her a big international star. In 1957, however, she divorced Vadim (who later married Jane Fonda and tried to make a sexy star out of *her*, with much less success).

In 1960, she won a following as an actress with Clouzot's "The Truth." Eventually, however, she retired from acting and started the Brigitte Bardot Foundation for the Protection of Distressed Animals, for which she auctioned off her jewelry. In 1985, the former sexbomb was awarded the French Legion of Honor!

Voluptuous beauty

For her part, Sophia Loren was a lush, voluptuous Neapolitan beauty in the '50s, a sexy starlet who was so determined to make it big in the movies that she was prepared to do almost anything to get noticed.

Luckily for her, she was discovered by producer Carlo Ponti when she was only 15, and he charted a more progressive career course for her that eventually stressed her acting ability rather than her pneumatic physical assets.

Italian films

She married him in 1957, left him in 1962, and they remarried in 1966. Under his tutelage, she starred in Italian films and went to Hollywood to co-star with the famous likes of Cary Grant, Frank Sinatra and Charlton Heston.

She also made films in England, including a comedy with Peter Sellers and Charlie Chaplin's last feature film, "Countess from Hong Kong." However, her best work was in Italy with Vittorio de Sica, whose "Two Women" (1960) won her a best actress Oscar.

De Sica also teamed her up with Marcello Mastroianni in "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" and "Marriage Italian Style," which were so successful that they co-starred in 10 other movies.

BARDOT. Seemingly uninhibited sensuality

MONROE. Ultimate screen goddess.

LOREN. More progressive career course.

Childlike vulnerability

Finally, Marilyn Monroe is regarded as "the ultimate screen goddess." Like Bardot, she combined eroticism with a childlike vulnerability that kept even her hottest portrayals from looking sleazy.

She first made her mark in "The Asphalt Jungle" (1950), and reached her apotheosis as the definitive blonde siren in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." Then, like Loren, she began to focus more on her thespic talent than on her physical allure, and is best remembered for "Some Like It Hot," "Bus Stop," and "The Misfits."

Tragically, she died in 1962—unlike Bardot and Loren, who continue to be regarded as celebrities to this day. Even in death, however, Marilyn eclipses them all.

German film studio gears up for new epic

POTSDAM, Germany—After the Oscar-winning success of "The Pianist," Germany's venerable Babelsberg film studio outside Berlin is set to start shooting its next hoped-for blockbuster, "Around the World in 80 Days."

Shooting begins April 16 for the movie, in which karate ace Jackie Chan is the adventurer who bets he can circumnavigate the world in 80 days.

CHAN. Plays an adventurer who bets he can circumnavigate the world in 80 days.

16,000 hopefuls

Two weeks ago, some 16,000 hopefuls turned up at the Babelsberg studio in Potsdam, southwest of Berlin, bidding for one of the 6,000 jobs on offer as extras.

Babelsberg spokesman Felix Neunzerling said the new production showed that the studio was "on the right track" following Roman Polanski's "The Pianist," which won Oscars for best director, best actor and best screenplay.

Founded in 1912, the Babelsberg studio was closely associated with some of the early greats in films, such as director Fritz Lang, before being overtaken by the Hollywood machine.

Economic slump

The studio has been hit hard by the economic slump in eastern Germany but the French group Vivendi Universal, which owns Babelsberg, has said it is to continue its investment in the site for at least five more years.

"There was never any concrete question to the contrary," Neunzerling said, adding that Vivendi had always denied speculation that it might pull out.

AFP

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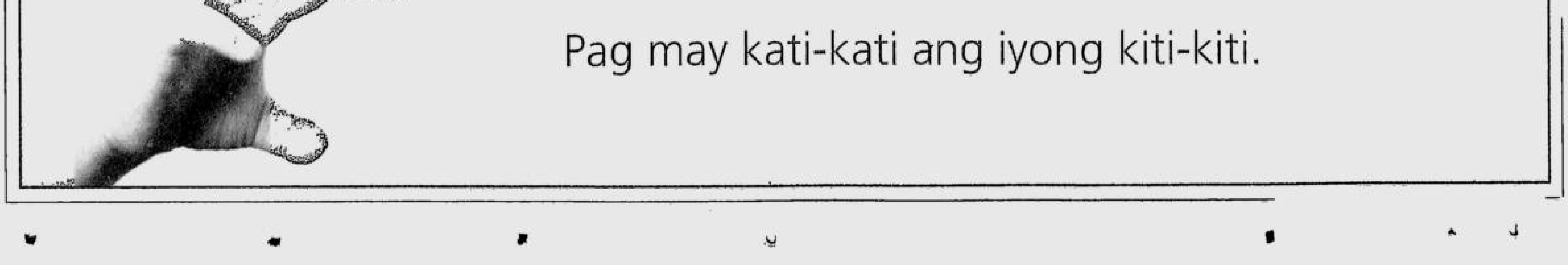

Pag may kati-kati ang iyong kiti-kiti.

‘Dirty Pretty Things’ bares ethnic London immigrants’ miserable lives

By Shasta Darlington

VENICE—In Stephen Frears’ new thriller “Dirty Pretty Things,” the British director turns the camera on London’s seedy underbelly, a world of illegal immigrants and shady crimes “that will terrify many people who think they know England.”

BRITISH director Stephen Frears (left) with actor Chiwetel Ejiofor.

AFP

Alternative universe

“It’s about an alternative universe. You can see what desperate lives people live,” the 61-year-old director said in an interview.

The story centers on a Nigerian illegal immigrant working as a night porter who stumbles on evidence of a bizarre murder and an underground organ trafficking ring. Together with a Turkish chambermaid, played by France’s Audrey Tautou (“Amelie”), he tries to solve the crime.

The movie shows the miserable lives of some immigrants to London and the lengths to which they will go to be accepted into mainstream society.

“Britain wasn’t always like this and people have terrible trouble accepting it,” said Frears.

Novel

The movie is based on a novel by Stephen Knight, who told reporters in Venice that while it is not a true story, the characters are based on real people and that organ trafficking that exploits desperate immigrants “is a reality.” “Dirty Pretty Things” also stars Chiwetel Ejiofor, who is himself the son of immigrants, in the role of Okwe the night porter, and Spanish actor Sergi Lopez as Sneaky, the sleazy hotel manager.

Little acting experience

Frears jokes that he chose a bunch of experienced actors who didn’t speak English and a bunch of English actors who had very little acting experience to star in his movie.

“I must be crazy,” the acclaimed director of “High Fidelity,” “Dangerous Liaisons” and “My Beautiful Laundrette” said.

Frears, never shy about breaking down cultural barriers, said he felt compelled to do this film to show that “England is such a divided country and there aren’t any connections between the two halves of London.”

“These aren’t the people you usually see in an English film, it’s completely new territory, fresh and modern,” he said.

The movie was shot mostly at night, often in cramped and dingy hotel rooms, emphasizing the message that “the things we take for granted, like fresh air, space and love, are luxuries.” But Frears says people will have to start accepting this other side of England.

“These things change slowly but in the end you can’t stop things changing, it just happens and you can’t stop it,” he said.

Reuters

Miyah’s prizewinning story

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

NINE-YEAR-OLD Miyah D. Queliste of Pagsanjan, Laguna has an unusual name. Parents Virgilio and Amalia said they were so sure their second child would be a boy that they had names for a son but none for a daughter. Born frail, the mother recalled sighing that *“maya-maya na lang”* their daughter had to be brought to a doctor. A variation of *maya-maya* became the girl’s name.

Pedicab

Queliste’s award for her story in Filipino, “Si Pipit at ang Makukulay na Basura,” couldn’t have come at a better time. Although willing to do anything to earn a living, Virgilio, who drives a pedicab, buys and sells junk, and repairs umbrellas and LPG stoves, has found the going rather rough lately.

His pedicab broke down, affecting his livelihood. But the religious family did not despair, believing that something good would happen. Miyah’s victory seems to be exactly what they hoped for. So, the family wants to donate part of her prize money to their church, the Dingin Baptist Church.

The young Queliste, a Grade IV pupil at Maulawin Elementary School in Pagsanjan, Laguna, talks about the benefits of recycling in her story, saying something beautiful can be made from trash.

Her characters are the animals her family has, except for the *pipit*, because she wants something that *“nakakaakit sa matatanda at bata.”*

Top winners

Miyah, Andionne Celeste Parlade, 12, and John Rijz G. Gabaon, 12, will be honored as this year’s top winners in RCBC’s 9th Kuwentong Kalikasan, Katha ng Kabataan (KKKK) at 5 p.m. on April 14 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium Podium 4, RCBC Plaza.

This year’s board of judges was chaired by Rizalinda Labanda, president of the Reading Association of the Philippines. Members are Emily Abrera, chair of McCann Erickson; Karina Bolasco, president, Anvil Publishing; Hermie Beltran of the CCP, and writer-pediatrician Dr. Luis Gatmaitan.

Here is Miyah’s short story:

“Si Pipit at ang Makukulay na Basura”

Isang araw, maagang gumising si Pipit. “Ang aliwalas ng paligid,” wika niya. Subalit natanaw niya ang mga kalat. “Manoka, tigilan mo na yang kakakaykay,” saway ni Pipit.

Sabay dating ni Itik na pitik ng pitik sa mga balat ng kendi, bote ng softdrinks, balat ng Chippy *at sirang parol na gawa sa straw at iba pa. “Itapon mo na lang yan diyan,” sabi ni Manoka, “O sige,” sagot ni Itik.*

Paglabas ni Pipit ay nagulat siya. “Aba!, napakarami na namang kalat, ano kaya ang pwede kong gawin sa mga ito?”

Flower vase

Makalipas ang ilang araw, nagulat sina Manoka at Itik. “Kay ganda’t makukulay ang mga dekorasyon mo, Pipit,” ang sabi ng dalawa. Kurtinang gawa sa straw, balat ng kendi na ginawang bulaklak, ginupit-gupit na balat ng Chippy na ginawang unan, at boteng softdrinks *na ginawang* flower vase!

Nagdatingan naman ang mga kapit-bahay at sinabi nila, “Pipit, maaari mo ba kaming igawa ng ganyan? Babayaran ka namin sa tamang halaga.” “Aba oo,” sabi ni Pipit.

Kaya’t hiniling ni Pipit kay Manoka at Itik na siya’y tulungan. Tuwang-tuwa namang pumayag ang dalawa. Naisip nilang nakatulong na silang mabawasan ang basura, gaganda pa ang paligid.

Mula noon naging magkakaibigan na sila!

E-mail the author at mn_photocom@i-manila.com.ph or call 5221905 and CF 0916-7060-130.

QUELISTE. Something beautiful can be made from trash.

The natural law

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WE found an interesting new feature in the Gulf News Tabloid titled “The Raw Truth—How Modern Diet Denies Us Life-giving Enzymes.” The article focused on the importance of eating food rich with enzymes—naturally raw and unprocessed food. Excerpts:

Microwave oven

“Just two seconds in a microwave oven is enough to kill all the living enzymes in food. Enzymes are absolutely essential for every aspect of human life, from digestion to fighting diseases. Moreover, all forms of cooking destroy enzymes, as do canning, pasteurizing, balancing, sterilizing, irradiating and refining processes. So, for many people eating the modern western diet, the occasional apple or side salad may be the only food containing enzymes that they ever eat!”

“What are enzymes, and why are they so important to our health? They are complex catalysts for almost every biochemical process that takes place in the body. All enzymes are destroyed at temperatures above 118 degrees F.

“There are at least 3,000 enzymes, and they fall into three major classifications.

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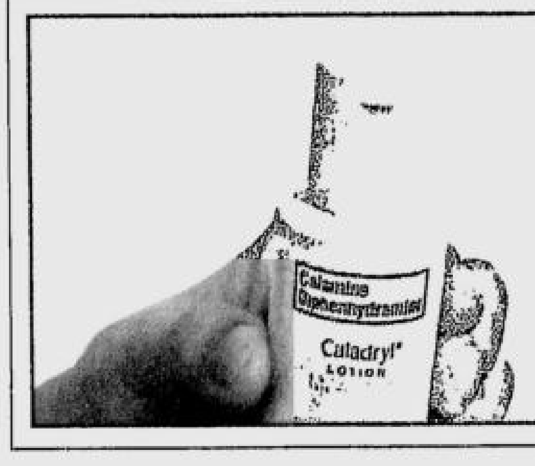

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Totoong tanggal ang kati!

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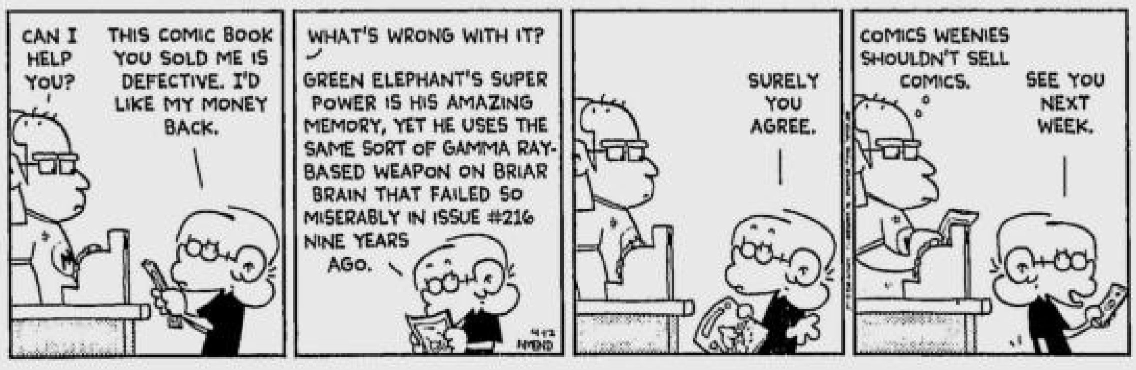
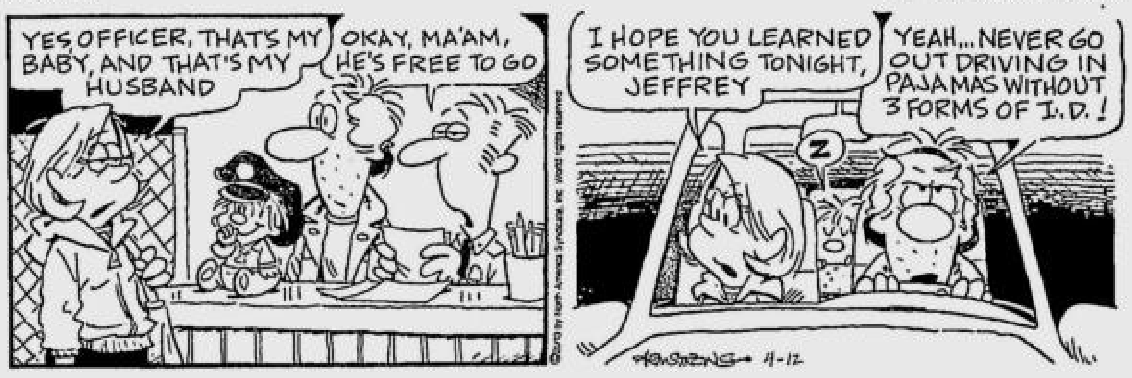
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CAN I HELP YOU?
THIS COMIC BOOK YOU SOLD ME IS DEFECTIVE. I'D LIKE MY MONEY BACK.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT?
GREEN ELEPHANT'S SUPER POWER IS HIS AMAZING MEMORY, YET HE USES THE SAME SORT OF GAMMA RAY-BASED WEAPON ON BRIAR BRAIN THAT FAILED SO MISERABLY IN ISSUE #216 NINE YEARS AGO.
SURELY YOU AGREE.
COMICS WEENIES SHOULDN'T SELL COMICS.
SEE YOU NEXT WEEK.

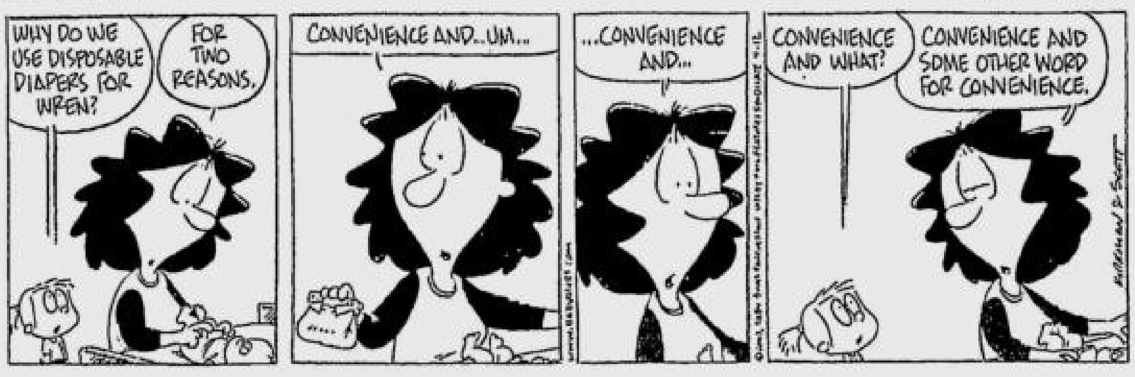
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


YES OFFICER, THAT'S MY BABY, AND THAT'S MY HUSBAND
OKAY, MA'AM, HE'S FREE TO GO
I HOPE YOU LEARNED SOMETHING TONIGHT, JEFFREY
YEAH... NEVER GO OUT DRIVING IN PAJAMAS WITHOUT 3 FORMS OF I.D.!
Z
ARMSTRONG 4-12

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHY DO WE USE DISPOSABLE DIAPERS FOR WREN?
FOR TWO REASONS.
CONVENIENCE AND...UM...
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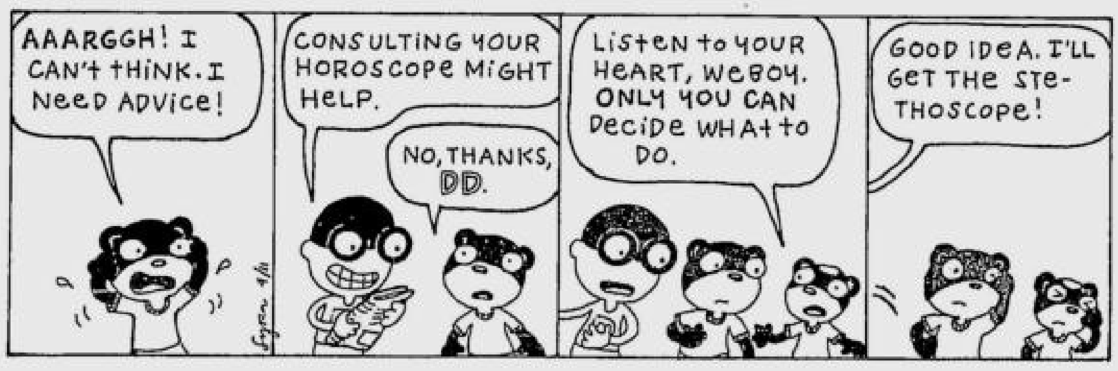
CONVENIENCE AND WHAT?
CONVENIENCE AND SOME OTHER WORD FOR CONVENIENCE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AAARGGH! I CAN'T THINK. I NEED ADVICE!
CONSULTING YOUR HOROSCOPE MIGHT HELP.
NO, THANKS, DD.
LISTEN TO YOUR HEART, WEBOY. ONLY YOU CAN DECIDE WHAT TO DO.
GOOD IDEA. I'LL GET THE STETHOSCOPE!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're strong-willed and pioneering. Your fearless courage constantly takes you to new terrain. You mean what you say and say what you mean. Your private life is often eccentric in some ways. You are definitely not conventional. Many of you are artists. Work hard in your head, because you can create or build something important. **Birthdate of:** Ron Perlman, actor; Eudora Welty, writer; Tony Dow, actor/director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): There's confusion today about money and who should buy what for whom. This particularly applies to your dealings with friends and groups. Be cautious.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be wary of idealizing important people today. You can't put others up on a pedestal. Everybody puts his or her pants on one leg at a time, just like you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You would really like to spend most of today daydreaming. You long for "pie in the sky" situations that will take you away from your predictable routine. Good luck.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be careful about any kind of negotiations today, especially about shared property or sharing responsibility for someone. Discussions about wills, inheritances and estates are confusing.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might get caught up in some truly wild ideas today, probably at work. This will happen if somebody appeals to your idealistic side.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): People are likely to ask you for extra help today. Even though you want to help, you do have to stay in the real world.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is not a good day for financial negotiations, trying to split something fairly or discussions about romantic liaisons. Confusion and misunderstandings are rampant.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Try to keep all your communication clear today. There is a general confusion out there that causes misunderstandings or makes you act evasively and deceptively.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): It's hard to get the straight story from somebody at work today. You don't want to be taken advantage of, and you don't want to be callous either. (Tough call.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be careful of business dealings, contracts, negotiations and agreements. According to the experts, even in the best of communications only 40 percent gets back and forth. Today it's half that.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a strong desire to talk to family members now; however, today is a very poor day to do so. Mercury, the planet of communications, is on bad terms with fuzzy Neptune. That's why your conversations are like talking to someone through a mask.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid important agreements today. You will not be able to assess things correctly. Furthermore, you will not be able to defend your own position as you should.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Easily offended person
9 Scamp
15 Moral fable
16 Main dish
17 Sticklers
18 Eyeball cover
19 Lager alternative
20 Man from Tulsa
22 Hole enlarger
26 Missile garage
27 Mel of Cooperstown
28 Of the inner lining of a vein
30 For each
31 Modernist's prefix
32 More humid
34 Passing crazes
35 Mugged for the camera
39 Dress for Indira
42 "Chinatown" director
46 Signal
47 Little legume
50 Slave
51 Trajectory
52 Capital of Latvia
54 School themes
55 Introduced a new product
58 Shad delicacy
59 Enliven
60 Of a metabolic disorder
64 Moistening device
65 Rude
66 Falls as ice
67 Light knocks

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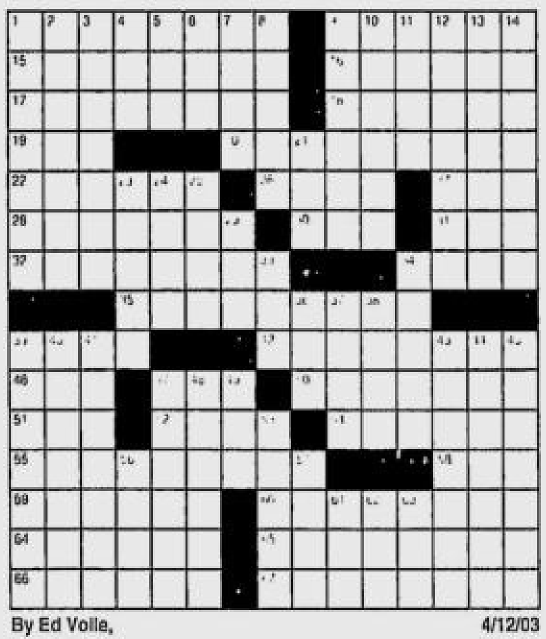
1 African journeys
2 Luxurious
3 Optimistic
4 Ernie of the links
5 Short jaunt
6 Division of the psyche
7 Model T or T-bird
8 Classroom furniture
9 Used deal
10 Source of security
11 French town west of Caen
12 Amati's hometown
13 Ventilated
14 Simple outbuildings
21 Insolent talk
23 Marlins' home
24 Poet Lazarus
25 SWAT team attack
29 Confederate general
33 Talk informally
34 Makes an effort to resist
36 Watch accessory
37 Shaving-cream ingredient
38 Fires
39 Egyptian beetles
40 Of the dawn
41 Shut back up again
43 Spruce (up)
44 Knocking out
45 Bugs
47 Lock in the dials
48 Ducks for down
49 Before now
53 Look over the ledger
56 Pipe sealant
57 Turner or Louise
61 Cleopatra's snake
62 "__ 'til You Drop"
63 Inventor Whitney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By Ed Voile, Gillette, WY

4/12/03

Friday's Puzzle Solved

G	R	A	S	P	■	O	S	S	A	■	P	A	I	D
R	I	G	O	R	■	A	T	T	U	■	A	N	T	A
A	M	O	L	E	■	S	E	A	T	■	S	T	E	M
B	E	G	I	N	N	I	N	G	O	F	T	I	M	E
■	■	■	■	A	B	S	■	■	G	A	Y	■	■	■
E	R	R	A	T	A	■	S	T	Y	X	■	T	B	S
M	O	O	L	A	■	C	O	I	R	■	W	H	E	T
M	I	D	D	L	E	O	F	N	O	W	H	E	R	E
E	L	E	A	■	X	R	A	Y	■	E	A	S	E	L
T	S	O	■	A	I	D	E	■	G	A	M	E	T	E
■	■	■	A	L	S	■	■	F	O	R	■	■	■	■
E	N	D	O	F	T	H	E	R	A	I	N	B	O	W
L	E	E	R	■	E	A	S	E	■	E	A	R	T	H
B	A	R	T	■	N	I	N	A	■	S	P	I	T	E
E	T	N	A	■	T	R	E	K	■	T	E	T	O	N

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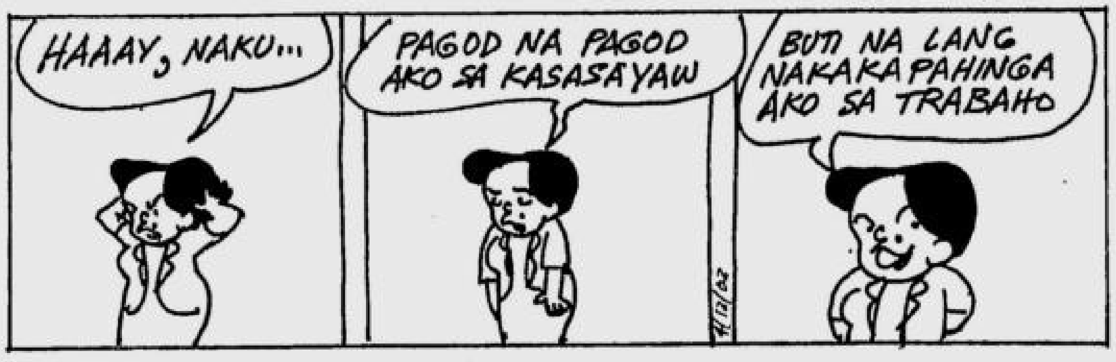
4/12/03

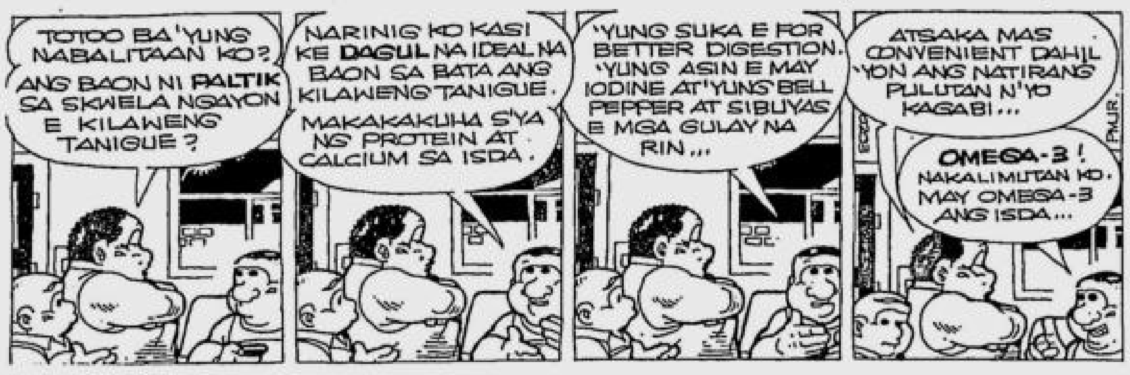
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HAAAY, NAKU...
PAGOD NA PAGOD AKO SA KASASAYAW
BUTI NA LANG NAKAKAPAHINGA AKO SA TRABAHO
4/12/03

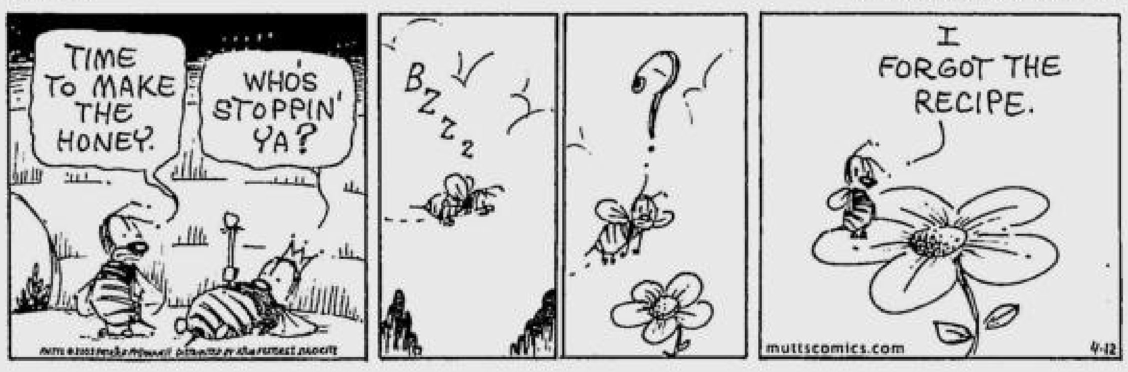
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TOTOO BA 'YUNG NABALITAAN KO? ANG BAON NI PALTIK SA SKWELA NGAYON E KILAWENG TANIGUE?
NARINIG KO KASI KE DAGUL NA IDEAL NA BAON SA BATA ANG KILAWENG TANIGUE. MAKAKAKUHA S'YA NG PROTEIN AT CALCIUM SA ISDA.
'YUNG SUKA E FOR BETTER DIGESTION. 'YUNG ASIN E MAY IODINE AT 'YUNG BELL PEPPER AT SIBUYAS E MGA GULAY NA RIN...
ATSAKA MAS CONVENIENT DAHIL 'YON ANG NATIRANG PULUTAN N'YO KAGABI...
OMEGA-3! NAKALIMUTAN KO. MAY OMEGA-3 ANG ISDA...
PMJR.

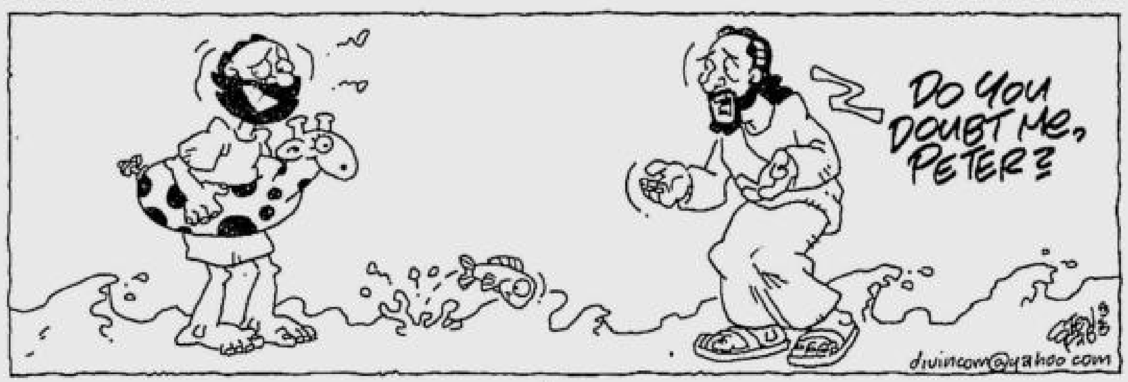
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


TIME TO MAKE THE HONEY.
WHO'S STOPPIN' YA?
BZZZ
?
I FORGOT THE RECIPE.
muttscomics.com
4-12

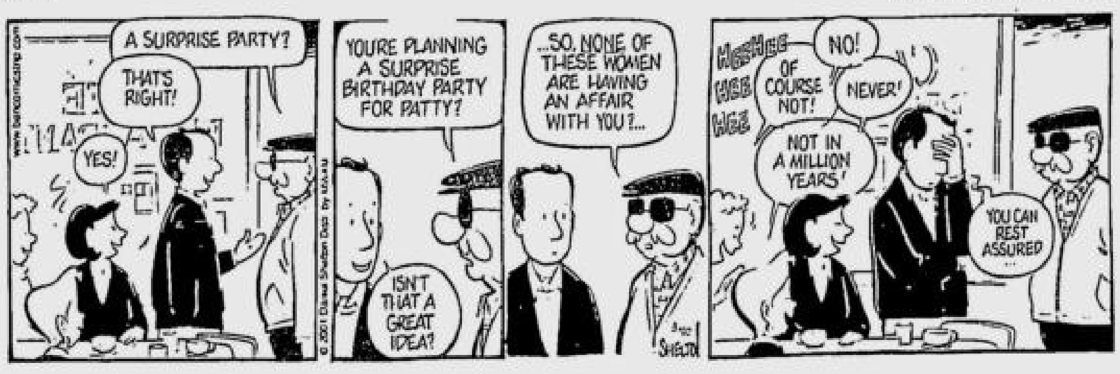
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DO YOU DOUBT ME, PETER?
divincom@yahoo.com

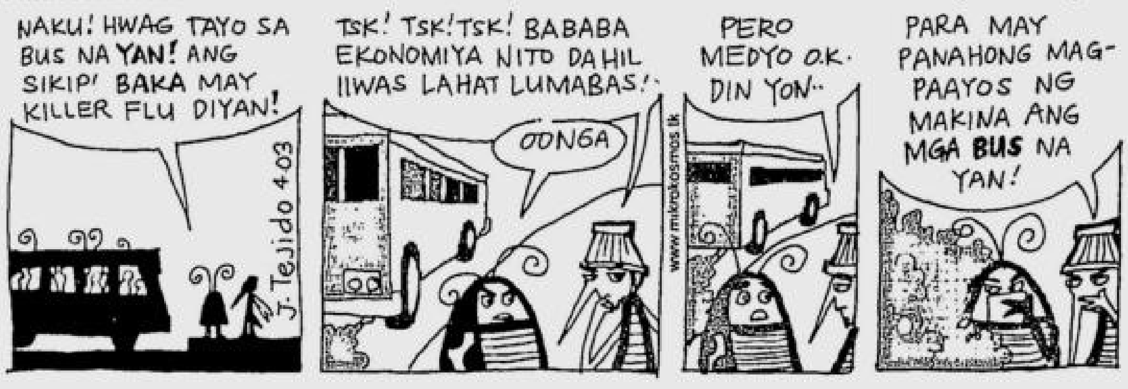
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


A SURPRISE PARTY?
THAT'S RIGHT!
YES!
YOU'RE PLANNING A SURPRISE BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR PATTY?
ISN'T THAT A GREAT IDEA?
...SO, NONE OF THESE WOMEN ARE HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH YOU?...
HEE HEE HEE HEE
NO!
OF COURSE NOT!
NEVER!
NOT IN A MILLION YEARS!
YOU CAN REST ASSURED
SHELTON

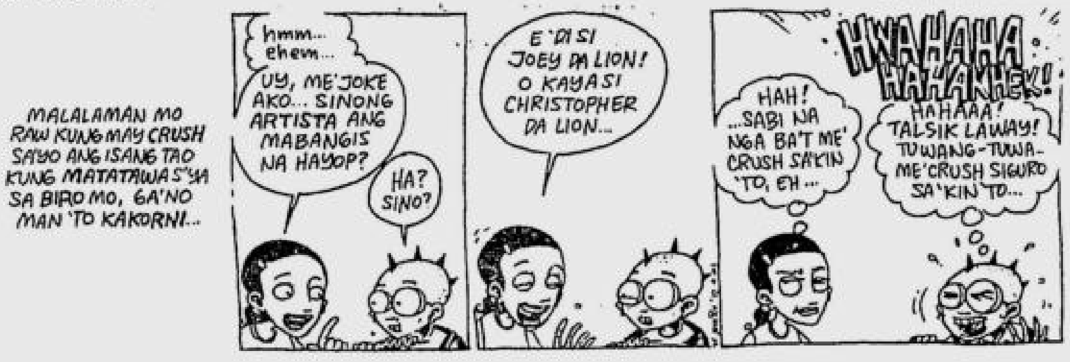
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKU! HWAG TAYO SA BUS NA YAN! ANG SIKIP! BAKA MAY KILLER FLU DIYAN!
J. Tejido 4-03
TSK! TSK! TSK! BABABA EKONOMIYA NITO DAHIL IIWAS LAHAT LUMABAS!
OONGA
www.mikrokosmos.tk
PERO MEDYO O.K. DIN YON..
PARA MAY PANAHONG MAG-PAAYOS NG MAKINA ANG MGA BUS NA YAN!

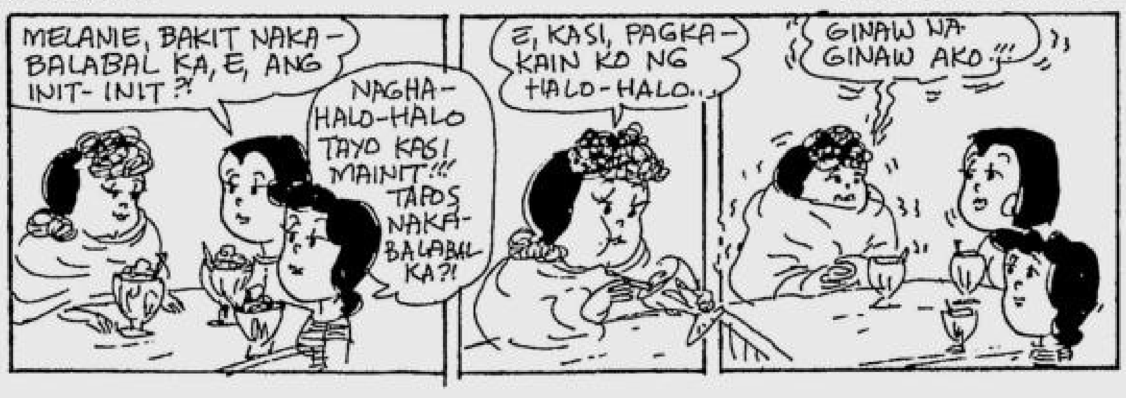
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MALALAMAN MO RAW KUNG MAY CRUSH SA'YO ANG ISANG TAO KUNG MATATAWA S'YA SA BIRO MO, GA'NO MAN 'TO KAKORNI...
hmm... ehem...
UY, ME' JOKE AKO... SINONG ARTISTA ANG MABANGIS NA HAYOP?
HA? SINO?
E 'DI SI JOEY DA LION! O KAYA SI CHRISTOPHER DA LION...
HWAHAHA HAHAHEK!
HAH! ...SABI NA NGA BA'T ME' CRUSH SA'KIN 'TO, EH...
HAHAAA! TALSIK LAWAY! TUWANG-TUWA. ME' CRUSH SIGURO SA'KIN 'TO...

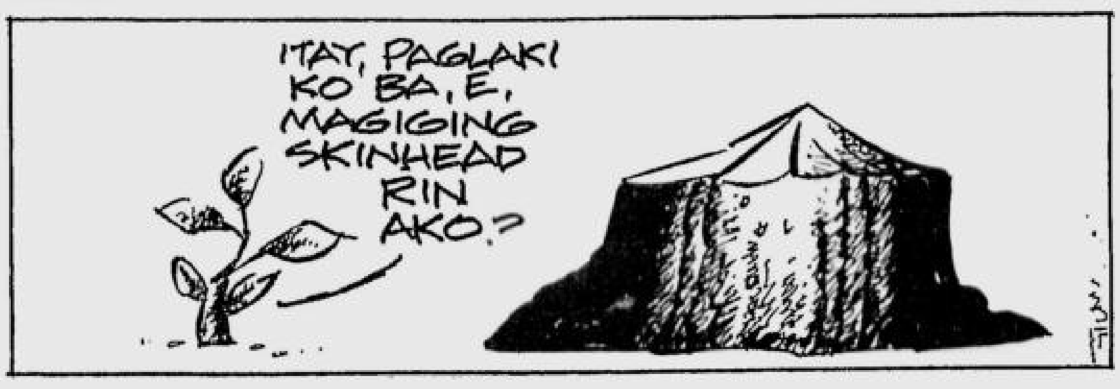
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, BAKIT NAKA-BALABAL KA, E, ANG INIT-INIT?!
NAGHA-HALO-HALO TAYO KASI MAINIT!!! TAPOS NAKA-BALABAL KA?!
E, KASI, PAGKA-KAIN KO NG HALO-HALO...
GINAW NA GINAW AKO!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ITAY, PAGLAKI KO BA, E, MAGIGING SKINHEAD RIN AKO?

'Old School' is smarter than the average college comedy

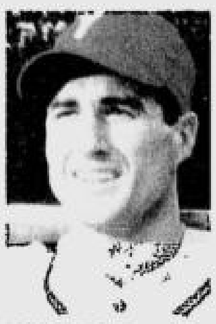
By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—"Old School" is the first film to feature Snoop Dogg and James Carville—not in the same scene, unfortunately, but hey, there's always room for a sequel!

But it's even more remarkable for what it doesn't feature: mean-spirited, gross-out humor.

Birthday

Sure, things get a little raunchy, as you'd expect from a movie about three guys in their 30s who form a fraternity. There's KY Jelly wrestling to celebrate the birthday of the oldest frat brother, who's turning 89. Frank (Will Ferrell), one of the group's founders, ends up streaking through town after guzzling a series of beer bongs. And Mitch (Luke Wilson), the fraternity's "Godfather," achieves that status only after coming home early one day and finding his girlfriend (Juliette Lewis) involved in a kinky threesome.



WILSON. Fraternity's "Godfather."

But "Old School" is smarter than the average college comedy, with a talented, likable cast. It's quick and light on its feet, and it doesn't beat the same stupid jokes into the ground. It's almost kinda—sweet.

Crossroads

Longtime buddies Mitch, Frank and Beanie (a fast-talking, scene-stealing Vince Vaughn) find themselves at a crossroads about a decade after graduating from college. Mitch has just broken up with his girlfriend and is unhappy with his job. Frank is a newlywed but his marriage is already on the rocks. And Beanie is married with two kids (Leah Remini from television's "The King of Queens" plays his wife) and a successful chain of stereo equipment stores, but he's bored.

When Mitch moves into a house on their old college campus, Frank and Beanie immediately take over in a desperate attempt to cling to their youth and freedom. After only their first raging kegger—where Snoop Dogg takes the stage and gets his rap on for hundreds of hammered students—uptight Dean Pritchard (Jeremy Piven) tries to kick them out of the house and use the place for college purposes. *AP*

The natural law

From page E4

The largest number are the metabolic enzymes, which play a role in all bodily processes, including maintenance of the immune system. In the second category are the 22 digestive enzymes, which help digest food in the mouth, stomach and intestines.

Pioneer

"Dr. Edward Howell, a pioneer in enzyme research, observed that humans and animals on a diet comprised largely of cooked food have an enlarged pancreas, the organ which produces digestive enzymes, up to three times the size of people on an all-natural diet.

Dr. Howell was emphatic on the importance of enzymes in the health process: "'There is no other mechanism in the body except enzyme action to protect the body from any hazard. Hormones do not 'work.' Vitamins do not 'work.'"

Dr. Howell has formulated the sobering axiom that the length of one's life is inversely proportional to the rate of exhaustion of your enzyme potential. Put simply, eating raw, enzyme-rich food decreases the rate of exhaustion of your enzyme potential and gives you health, energy and long life.

Intestinal tract

"When enzyme levels are low, food cannot be properly digested. The intestinal tract becomes congested with partially digested food particles, like a clogged sewer pipe. Undigested food particles cling to intestines, forming walls of encrustation that block vitamins and minerals from being absorbed by the body, and begin to putrefy and become toxic.

"Bacteria and parasites begin to flourish and live in the bowel. Eventually, this condition creates holes in the lining of the intestines, allowing partially digested food particles, toxins, bacteria and parasites to seep through the bowel wall and into the bloodstream, a condition referred to as leaky gut syndrome."

Therefore, we should cut down on the cooking process and eat more fresh fruits, vegetables and juices! Fresh and raw—that's the natural law.

Email lotuspond108@hotmail.com

Juliette Binoche plays journalist covering South Africa's Truth Commission

CAPE TOWN, South Africa—French actress Juliette Binoche said Thursday she found portraying a journalist covering South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission "emotional and demanding."

Award-winning novel

Binoche is costarring with the American actor Samuel L. Jackson in a film currently being shot in Cape Town, based on the award-winning novel "Country Of My Skull" by Antjie Krog.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which closed down in 1998, investigated political crimes committed during the decades of racist apartheid rule in South Africa in an attempt to heal the wounds of that era.

Amnesty

Officials maintained that South Africa could not move into a peaceful future without understanding its past and granted amnesty to perpetrators willing to tell the truth about their crimes.

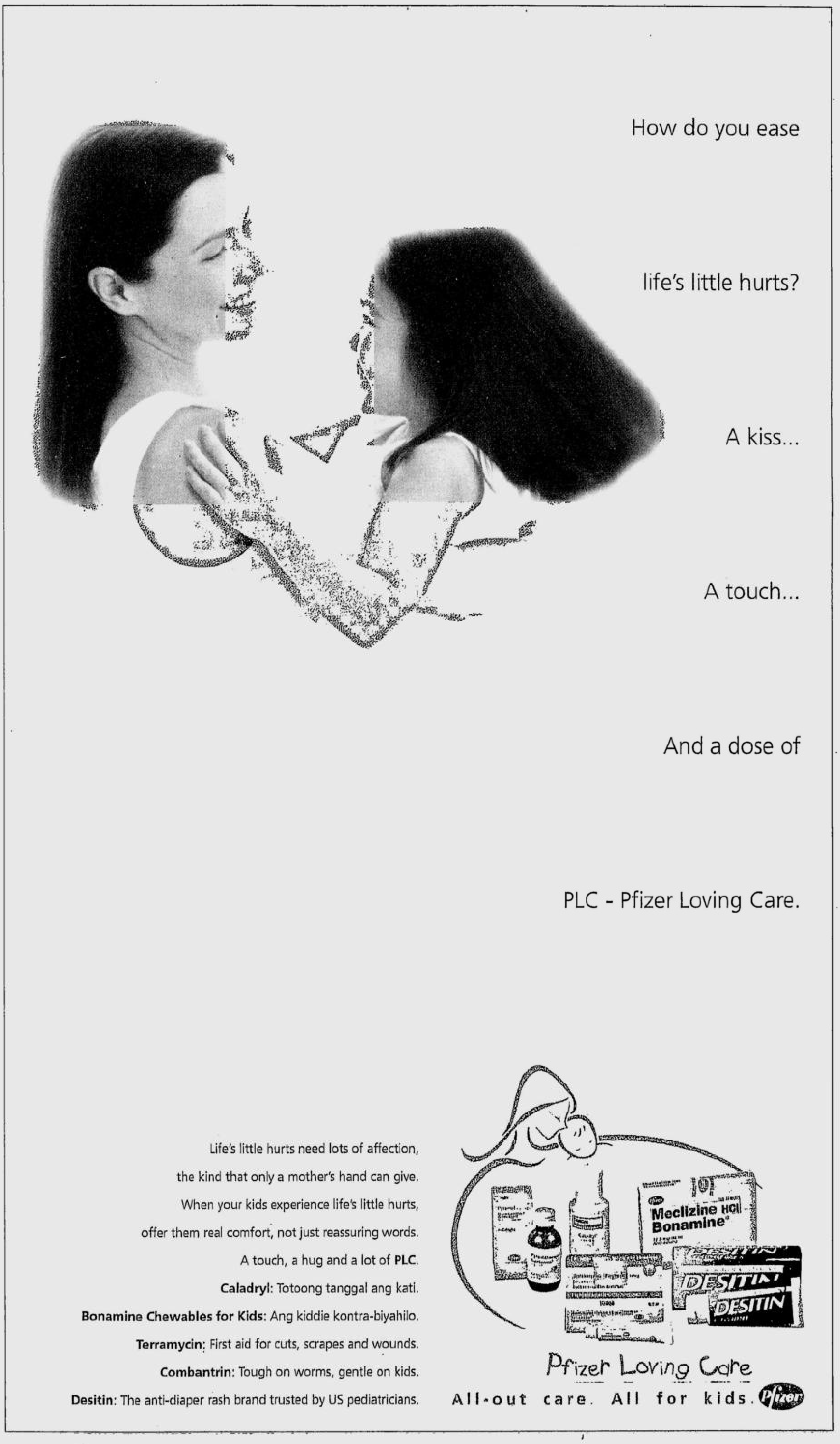
"(The film) is about the horror," Binoche said.

John Boorman, the movie's British director, told reporters that the movie would do justice to the country's painful past, the South African Press Association reported.

Period of transition

"Everyone is conscious of what the (commission) has been for South Africa in this period of transition," director Boorman said. "We are all determined to make it as accurate and serious as we can." AP

BINOCHE. Fi
playing her la
role "a
d



How do you ease

life's little hurts?

A kiss...

A touch...

And a dose of

PLC - Pfizer Loving Care.

Life's little hurts need lots of affection,
the kind that only a mother's hand can give.
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A touch, a hug and a lot of **PLC**.
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Bonamine Chewables for Kids: Ang kiddie kontra-biyahilo.
Terramycin: First aid for cuts, scrapes and wounds.
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Desitin: The anti-diaper rash brand trusted by US pediatricians.

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*For switchers only
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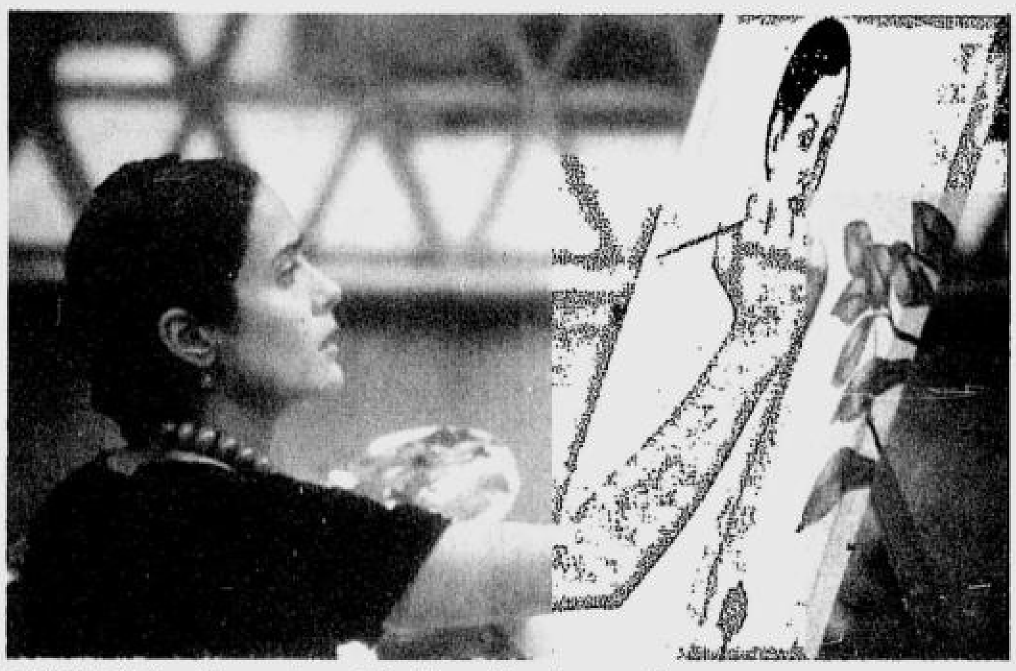
SATURDAY Special



HAYEK. Did "anything and everything" to put her dream on film.

'Frida' is Salma Hayek's cinematic labor of love

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN Mexican actress Salma Hayek first "went Hollywood" in movies like "Desperado" and "From Dusk Till Dawn," industry observers dismissed her as yet another stereotypical Latin spitfire. They figured that, like most other bombshells from south of the border, she would quickly vanish, practically without a trace.

Big surprise

Well, it turns out that Salma had a big surprise in store for them. Not only hasn't she disappeared as a film performer, but she's even added film and TV producing to her bag of tricks, and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actress for her 2002 starrer, "Frida."

The film chronicles the life Mexican artist Frida Kahlo shared with the famous muralist Diego Rivera, as well as her controversial affair with Leon Trotsky *and* her romantic entanglements with women.

Salma, a longtime fan of Frida Kahlo, did "anything and everything" to put her dream on film. She convinced Alfred Molina to play Diego Rivera, and Geoffrey Rush to portray Leon Trotsky.

Impressed

Armed with her powerful lead cast, she took "Frida" to Miramax's Harvey Weinstein. Impressed by Clancy Sigel's script, as well as Salma's devotion and tenacity, Weinstein agreed to bankroll the project and got Tony Award winner Julie Taymor to direct.

After years of slammed doors, "Frida" finally began production in 2001, and Salma could finally breathe a sigh of relief.

She shares, "I expected that the film would say something fantastic about Mexico and this truly extraordinary woman, but it gave me even more, something that I was not counting on. It was an extra present: It proved to me how loved I was by my friends, who did so much to help me make my dream a reality."

Inseparable

Once virtually unknown outside of Mexico, Kahlo is now world-famous, thanks to the more than 100 books written about her and Rivera. She's celebrated because she was able to fuse the personal, artistic and political in an organic and brutally honest way, to the extent that her life and art became inseparable.

"The love of Frida and Diego lasted because it was real," director Julie Taymor observes. "It began with mutual respect for each other as artists and comrades in spirit, and grew into a profound intellectual, artistic and erotic attraction."

Full of courage

For Hayek, the key to the couple's love and art was their "willingness to find out who the other person was—and who they were themselves. Frida was so full of courage to be who she was and to take life as it came, and to enjoy every second of it intensely—even the suffering. That's why she's such an inspiration to me. Her passion made me passionate!"

Hayek's passion continues to peak even after "Frida." She has since starred and co-produced the showtime movie, "In the Time of the Butterflies," in which she was nominated for a Critics' Choice award.

Directorial debut

She is producing and directing "The Maldonado Miracle," starring Peter Fonda, Mare Wnningham and Latin singer Rubin Blades. The Showtime production is Hayek's directorial debut.

And she will star in Robert Rodriguez's "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" with Antonio Banderas and Johnny Depp. Clearly "Frida" has helped Salma Hayek gained the respect in Hollywood that she's been trying to get for almost 10 years!

'Spider' is an unforgettably disturbing viewing experience

By Matt Wolf

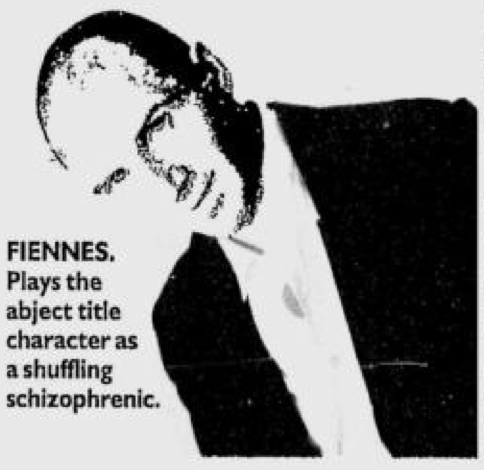
NEW YORK—Few will quickly forget the opening shot of "Spider," the David Cronenberg film that has been deftly adapted from Patrick McGrath's 1990 book.

Platform

A train sputters into a London railway station, disgorging its passengers. And as the camera pans down the platform, one catches a first glimpse of the muttering, abject title character, the shuffling schizophrenic played by Ralph Fiennes.

It's an eerie and startling start to a no less unusual film, one which—perhaps par for the course with the director who gave us "Crash" and "eXistenZ"—is unlikely to be to everyone's taste. But those who stick with it should find "Spider" an unforgettably disturbing experience in its ability to dig deeply and unsentimentally into one man's damaged mind.

What led the tellingly nicknamed Spider to this sorry state? In an unusual case of a novelist adapting the film version of his book himself, McGrath weaves his own ever-tightening narrative web. The movie begins by focusing on the adult Spider, who's been institutionalized for years, adjusting to a halfway house of sorts overseen by the stern Mrs. Wilkinson (Lynn Redgrave).



FIENNES. Plays the abject title character as a shuffling schizophrenic.

Traumatized boy

Before long, "Spider" spins backward two decades to show him as a traumatized boy (10-year-old Bradley Hall) in a household ruled by his gruff working-class father (Gabriel Byrne) and the fond mother (Miranda Richardson) whom the father murdered. Or maybe not: the delusional Spider, we soon learn, isn't all that reliable when it comes to telling the truth.

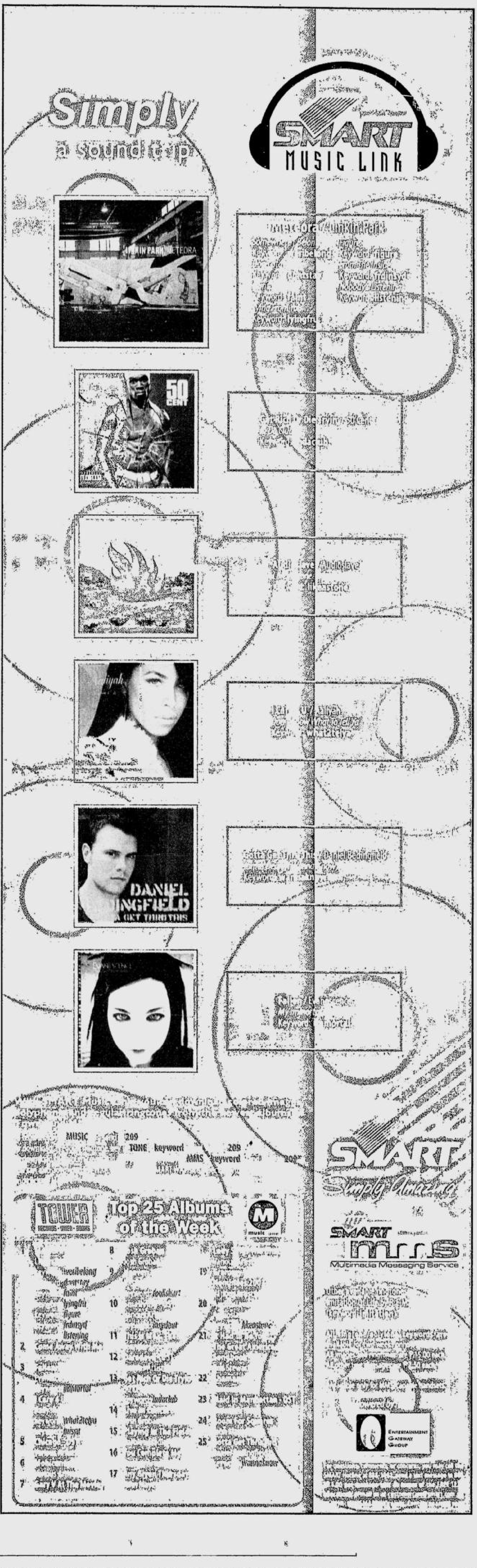
To reveal much more would give the game away, although one can safely report Richardson's adroit juggling of three roles.

Released on a limited basis in December to qualify for the Academy Awards, "Spider" should have resulted in Oscar recognition for Richardson, since hers is among the finest female performances in a year full of them. (And so defiantly uncommercial a film could surely use every boost it can get.)

At the same time, cineastes will exult in Cronenberg's sheer craft in what easily constitutes this director's most insidiously unsettling film since 1988's "Dead Ringers"—and without the assistance of the kind of special effects much loved by the man who made "Naked Lunch," "The Fly" and "Scanners."

This movie, by contrast, finds the disquiet in an ostensibly straightforward shot of the familiar and spidery children's pastime, cat's cradle.

AP



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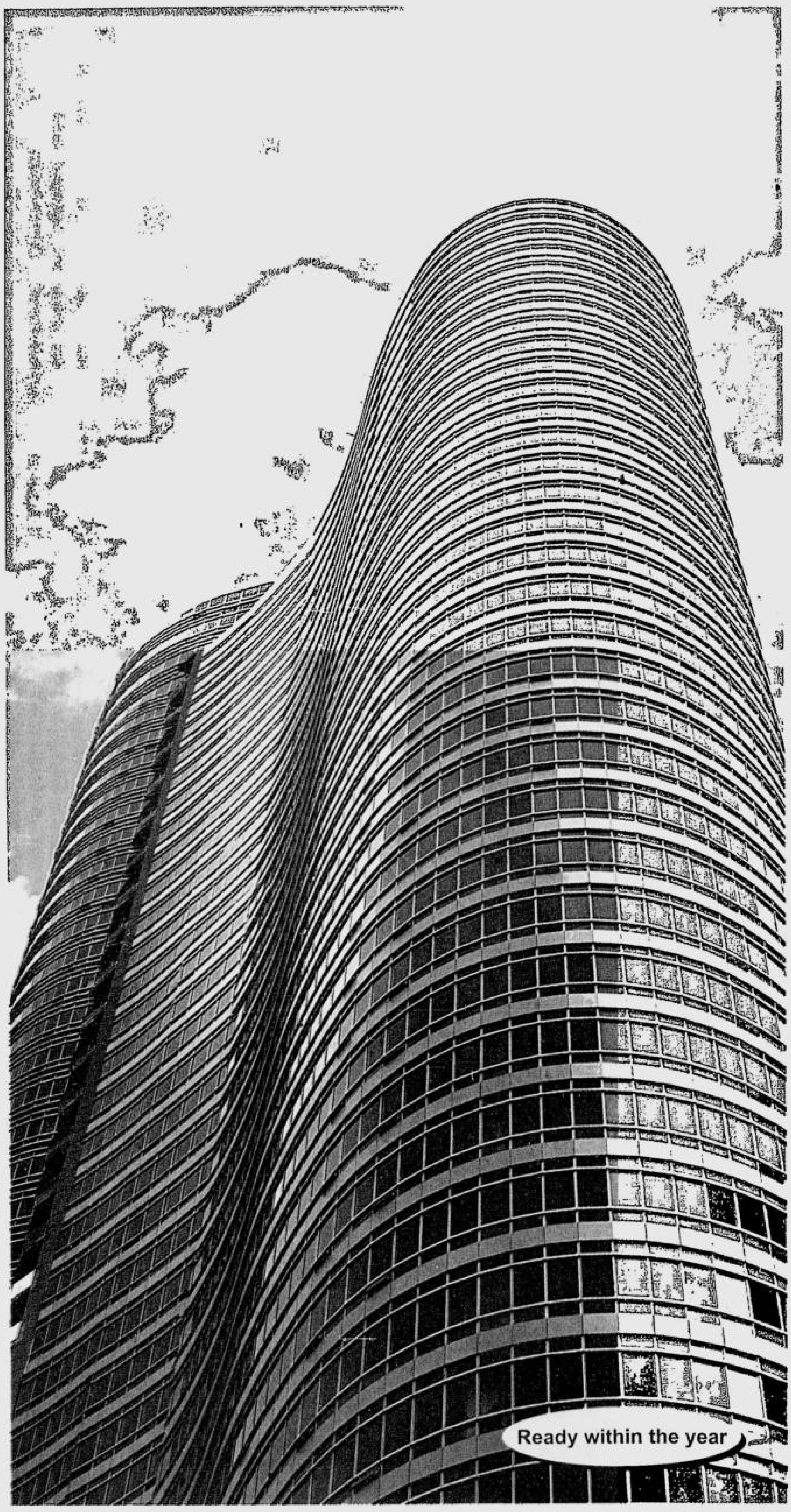
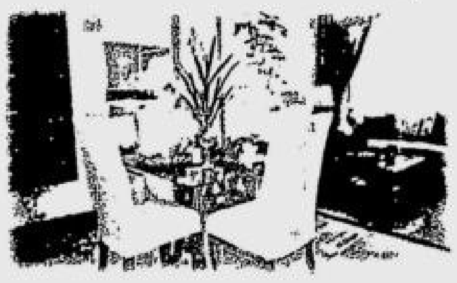


Beyond

It doesn't just build innovative high rise residential condominiums, it creates pieces of art – structures definitely worth looking up to, both literally and figuratively. Philippine Townships, Inc. (Philtown), the property development subsidiary of one of the country's food giants, RFM Corporation, proudly presents the two newest landmarks at the Bonifacio Global City, the country's emerging premier location. The One McKinley Place and Fairways Tower give new shape not only to luxury living but to modern urban architecture as well.



At the heart of the Bonifacio Global City. One McKinley Place is the epitome of style and absolute grace. Its appeal strikes anybody who takes even the slightest glance at its imposing structure. One can't help but be captivated by the aura it exudes – that of taste and undeniable grandeur.

One McKinley Place is
class. A 43-storey two
one by a sophisticated g
creation of no less than
Kassabaum (HOK) of I
architectural authority,

While the structu
the prestigious ad
makes it all the
at the west of Fo
edge of the new
McKinley Place
from Manila's c
shopping centers
in the midst of a
and gives way to
Golf, Antipolo I
Makati skyline.

One McKinley Place is
offer. From its state-of-
amenities...there's littl

Imagine a lifestyle of
fingertips. Indulge in th
pool shaped like a lago
the recreational lounge.

Land

An architectural wonder in wood, glass and concrete, The Fairways Tower can't help but stand out with its unique wood-laden exterior inspired by nature.

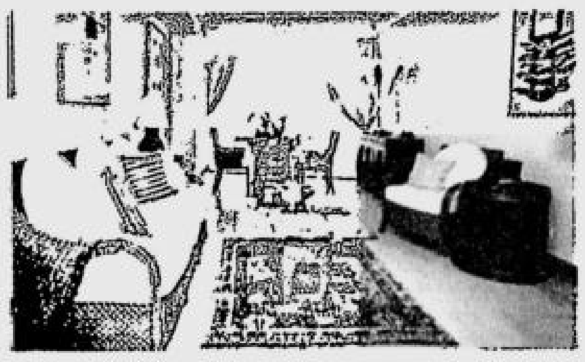
Conceived by the world-renowned design firm Edmonds International Ltd. and leading Filipino architect Roger Villarosa, the Fairways Tower is a one-of-a-kind masterpiece, nestled at the most prestigious crest of the Bonifacio Global City.

Architect Roger Villarosa describes the Fairways Tower structure as one with an *orientation that follows the axis of the eastern edge of the Manila Golf fairways, takes advantage of the nice and interesting views of the golf link, the Forbes Park landscape, the skylines of the Makati and Bonifacio Global cities and the world-famous Manila Bay.*

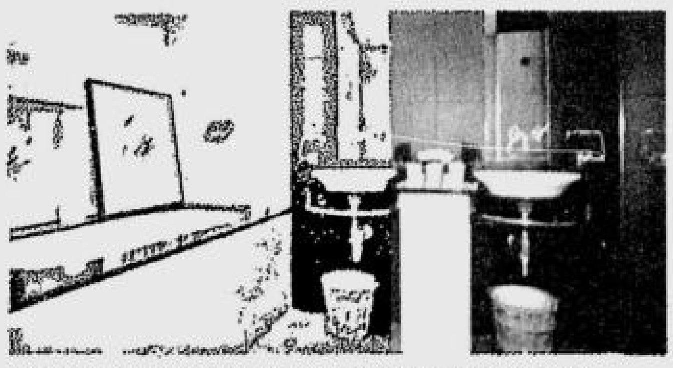
The facade of the Fairways Tower is simply beautiful in its warmth and elegance... an image that is hard to forget.

Most of all, the 28-storey structural gem is easily the fulfillment of the urban dweller's dream of a privileged lifestyle
security and conveni
is at the crossroads of
- the McKinley Roa
address of the rich
Jacinto Road of Bo
prime address doesn't
and prestige. b
convenience. There's
and easy access
Manila's centra
business districts
such as Makati and
Ortigas. The
leading business
establishments,
world-class
shopping centers,
best educationa
institutions and lat
entertainment hubs ar
just a stone's thr

World-class interiors
the stunning exterior
The lobby has a 6-m
that offers an ambie



One McKinley Place: Two-Bedroom Unit Living Room
Ultimate luxury fits right into this ultra modern living room



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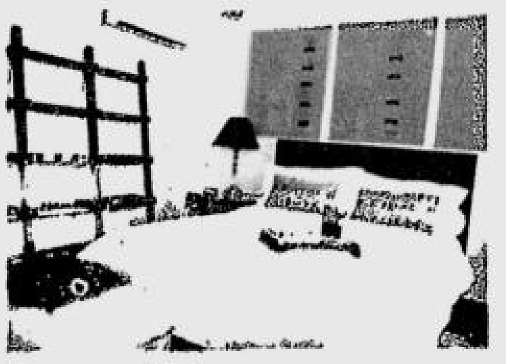

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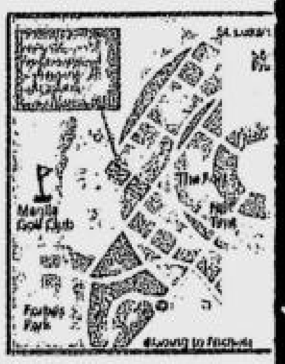

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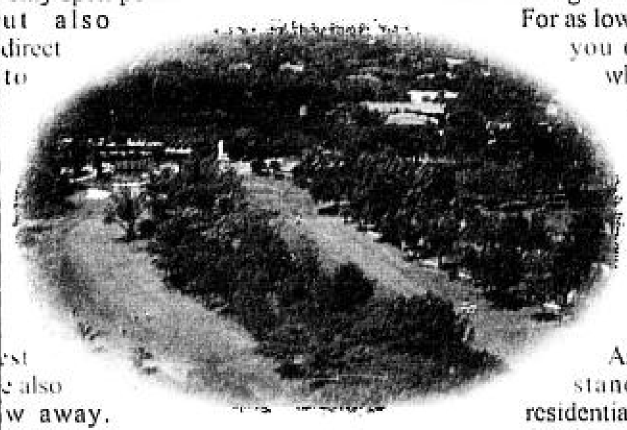

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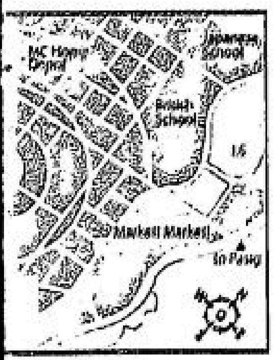

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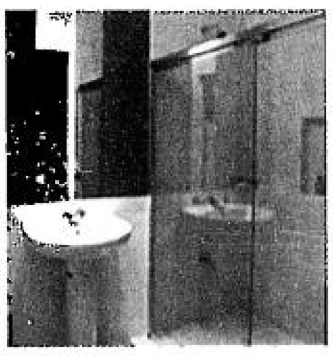
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Hemingway letters to Dietrich donated to library

By Greg Frost

BOSTON—Thirty letters written by author Ernest Hemingway to screen siren Marlene Dietrich along with several early drafts of his stories and poems have been donated to the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, the library announced on Monday.

Deborah Leff, director of the library in Boston, called the donation a "rich addition" to the center, which is already home to 95 percent of Hemingway's manuscripts and correspondence. Library staff acknowledged that they only learned of the documents' existence within the past few years.

Larger than life

"Here are two of the most iconic figures of the 20th century—one of the great American writers and one of the great actresses, both of them larger than life—and shared among them are these extraordinary, intimate and loving letters," Leff told Reuters.

The documents, which were given to the library by Dietrich's daughter, Maria Riva, will be made public in 2007.

Riva has kept them since her mother died in Paris in 1992.

Peter Riva, Maria's son, has seen the letters and said they depict a relationship of sincere "camaraderie" that was more than friendship, but fell short of an all-out physical romance.

"You read these letters and you come to understand that theirs was a relationship of firm, fast friendship based on an experience of the world they lived in," he said.

Unusual

"They could bare their souls in a way that was unusual then, and probably still is today."

Riva, a literary agent based in New York state, said his grandmother and the Nobel and Pulitzer prizewinning author never escalated their relationship to the height of physical love, but they nonetheless felt great pas-

HEMINGWAY/ G2

HEMINGWAY AND DIETRICH. Their relationship was more than friendship, but fell short of physical romance.

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ROÑO. Enrolled in a pre-med course.

GUTIERREZ. Exceedingly shy.

BABAO. Majored in film.

QUIJANO. Started as a writer.

How Tonton, other luminaries ended up in show biz

By Jocelyn Valle

SOME people are sure about what they want to do, only to find out later that they have a different purpose in life. Others take a detour from their chosen path, only to find their way back to the right track.

Different paths

Here are some lucky people who've taken different paths, but ended up in one destination—show-business:

Tonton Gutierrez always knew he'd end up in the biz. After all, he's the son of versatile actress Liza Lorena and former matinee idol Eddie Gutierrez, whose other children are likewise in the entertainment industry.

Problem was, he was exceedingly shy. He was already a young adult when he entered the movies, first as the perennial meek leading man in some Sharon Cuneta movies, and later in more interesting roles in diverse projects.

He found stardom on TV as one of the major players in the hit soap "Pangako sa 'Yo," and now is in Channel 7's "Habang Kapiling Ka."

Personality

He's learned to overcome his shyness and develop his personality. "*Hindi kasi p'wede sa* show biz *ang mahiyain*," he points out.

Tonton considers winning a best-actor trophy for his portrayal of a mentally challenged young man in "Saan Nagtatago ang Pag-ibig" as a defining moment. He's proven that he's got more than his parents' acting genes going for him. He has his own unique qualities as a formidable actor.

Chito Roño's childhood dream was to be a director. In grade school, he was cast in a play titled "Sino ang Maysala," with his cousins as co-actors. He also remembers tagging along with his grandmother in her movie-watching forays.

In college, however, he enrolled in a pre-med course at the Ateneo just to be with his friends. But he got bored and decided to follow his heart's desire. At UP, he majored in broadcasting and got involved in theater work.

Then Chito went abroad for further studies in film. When he came back, he opted to promote experimental cinema in the country. He dared himself to make his first feature, "Private Show," in 1986. He embraced mainstream cinema only after 1992's "Narito ang Puso Ko," which became a winner both at the tills and in film awards tilts.

His latest opus is the film version of Lualhati Bautista's powerful novel, "Dekada '70," and he'll soon start work on a film on the Balangiga massacre.

Youngest

Pido Lalimarmo of the band Pido with Take One is the youngest in a family of seven kids. He was exposed to and later absorbed his siblings' varied musical tastes.

When he was in Grade 5, he joined and won a singing contest. At 13, he started playing the guitar. Three years later, he tried singing in folk houses.

But it was only in 1984, at age 18, when he realized that he belonged to the music world. He formed his first group, FM Band, with Rodel and Naldy Gonzales, which in turn gave birth to the now popular Side A band.

"I just love to see the audience delighted everytime my band and I play," he enthuses.

Julius Babao loves the movies, that's why he majored in film at the UP College of Mass Communication. But, upon graduation in 1991, he found work as a reporter on GMA-7's radio station, dzBB ("Emergency's" Arnold Clavio is a contemporary). A few months later, Julius realized that broadcast journalism was really for him.

Devastation

It was the time of the great lahar devastation in Central Luzon, and Julius was right there. His life was in danger, but he chose to do his job. "*Doon ko na*-realize *kung bakit nandito ako sa trabahong ito!*" he exclaims.

Two years later, he moved to ABS-CBN, where he rose from news reporter ("TV Patrol") to anchor ("Hoy Gising") and then host ("Alas Singko y Medya," "Talk TV" and "Magandang Umaga, Bayan").

He hopes to finally direct his first movie soon!

Visual arts

Carlo Orosa had a wonderful time with La Salle Greenhills' popular performing group, Kundirana. In college, though, Carlo chose to pursue his interest in the visual arts.

But before he could earn his diploma from UST, the itch to perform lured him back to the stage. After waxing his self-titled debut album 1989, Carlo found his vocation. It has become not only a way to express his artistic self, but also to share his convictions.

His new mission in life led him to discover his other talents: acting in musical plays ("Joseph the Dreamer," "Little Mermaid") and managing a theater company (Trumpets). Carlo doesn't paint as much now, but he knows that he can always go back to it whenever he wants to.

Transformation

Douglas Quijano is credited with the transformation of former McDonald's crewmember Richard Gomez into one of show business' success stories (he has gone from lanky starlet to top actor, fashion icon and businessman).

He is also responsible for fast-tracking the careers of Joey Marquez, brothers Anjo and Jomari Yllana, Gelli de Belen and newer talents Wendell Ramos and Maricar de Mesa.

But Douglas never thought he'd get into talent management. "It just happened," he says. "I started as a writer then I went into PR. I also tried scriptwriting."

Then, one day, the late, great actress Charito Solis asked him to manage her career, and he proved to be great at it.

"But I'm more interested in discovering and building up stars ("Bagets" was Douglas' project for the then teenage Aga Muhlach)," he maintains. "Third *lang ang* management."

All of his talents get regular work and exposure, and he's never had major problems with them.

"I don't do contracts," he asserts. "If they want out, they just have to tell me. I don't collect their checks for them, either—that's their responsibility. *Para walang gulo!* Besides, I'm not good at organizing accounts."

THE "Titanic" soundtrack was so popular that it landed in the top 50 in the 1990s.

THE belief is that the "Chicago" album will do as well as "Moulin Rouge."

Movie music makers put new spin on soundtracks

By Sue Zeidler

LOS ANGELES—It was the dead of night when Luke Eddins high-tailed it to a production studio after receiving a frantic call needing a Smashing Pumpkins-like song for DreamWorks' hit film "The Ring."

Unknown bands

"I'm a last-minute unsigned-song bounty hunter," said Eddins, a "song placer" and musician who started Luke Hits, a firm that matches unknown bands with film music supervisors.

"I rescue music supervisors by sifting through literally thousands of underdog bands. I mostly find tracks that sound almost identical to a song by a high-profile artist," he said.

Due to Eddins' late night call, fledgling band Wide Awake, from Austin, Texas, landed their song in "The Ring," which went on to top the box office when it opened last October.

Eddins' song placements have taken off recently amid a depressed soundtrack market and as makers of film, television and video games increasingly search for music in more imaginative and cost-effective ways.

High-profile artist

Obtaining the green-light to license a song from a high-profile artist for a film is often like pulling teeth—and, after finally getting the recording label, publisher, managers, attorneys and the artist to commit, a 30-second clip of a song can cost the film in the neighborhood of $100,000.

After a soundtrack glut in the late 1990s, the music industry—which has seen sales decline overall for two straight years—has shied away from releasing so many movie albums, with the few hit soundtracks like "Moulin Rouge" and "O Brother Where Art Thou," standing out as exceptions.

"The heyday of soundtracks was in the 1990s when 'Titanic,' 'Armageddon' and other soundtracks routinely landed in the Top 50. Once soundtracks started to fizzle, the studios started to get cautious," said one industry executive.

Indeed, the album from Eminem's film, "8 Mile," was the only soundtrack to grace the Top 50 album sales chart for the week ended Dec. 15, compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.

Ranking No. 62 was the soundtrack to the latest "Lord of the Rings" installment, while "Lilo & Stitch" ranked No. 89.

Testament

To be sure, the success of "8 Mile" is largely a testament to Eminem's appeal, but also shows how the more successful soundtracks these days often have music not even in the film.

"There's a trend towards soundtracks that have the words 'music from and inspired by' in the title," says Dan Goldwasser, editor of SoundtrackNet, an online, soundtrack information site, who called the trend "disturbing."

"I'm a big fan of song-based and score-based soundtracks, but they have to do what is successful and marketable," he said.

Some moviemakers like Sandra Bullock, star and producer of the upcoming romance "Two Weeks Notice," decided to forego the depressed brick-and-mortar music market, choosing instead to release the movie's soundtrack to Pressplay, a new online music subscription service owned jointly by Vivendi Universal and Sony Corp.

Industry watchers cite a lot of buzz for the album of "Chicago," the musical based on the hit Broadway show of the same name, starring Renee Zellweger, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Richard Gere.

Hit soundtrack

The belief is "Chicago" will take off much like "Moulin Rouge," which had a hit soundtrack, selling more than two million units.

But others cite differences. The "Moulin Rouge" soundtrack, for instance, appealed to a pop audience because it featured covers of songs by artists like Madonna and Elton John, while "Chicago" features the movie's cast singing show tunes.

Some soundtrack experts feel that less is more, after the feeding frenzy of the 1990s when all the various record labels started up their own soundtrack units.

"The reality of the economy has caught up with consumers and we're looking and judging and trying to be as astute as we can. Getting a cool title song and riding the crest of the movie studio is no longer the key to a soundtrack success," Danny Bramson, president of Warner Music Group Soundtracks, said.

Warner Music is a unit of AOL Time Warner. *Reuters*

Four questions for Joe Satriani

By Chelsea J. Carter

LOS ANGELES—Guitar virtuoso Joe Satriani knows a thing or two about Grammy nominations, but he knows nothing about winning one of the music industry's highest honors.

Friends

Even his friends have poked fun at his Grammy-less streak, comparing him to soap opera star Susan Lucci, who finally won a best-actress Daytime Emmy after losing for 18 years straight.

After 12 nominations and no award, he wasn't expecting to break his losing streak with this year's nomination for best rock instrumental performance for "Starry Night."

"Since 1988, I've gotten nominations for every record. About five or six years into it, somebody brought up Susan Lucci and it sort of stuck," Satriani said in a phone interview. "Now every time Grammy time comes around, my friends start saying, 'It's Susan Lucci time.'"

He's still winless. The Flaming Lips won this year for "Approaching Pavonis Mons by Balloon (Utopia Planitia)," extending Satriani's losing streak to 13. Q&A:

After the success of Santana's Grammy-winning "Supernatural," would you consider pairing with vocalists?

I'm not quite sure it would be as artistically satisfying because I really do concentrate on development of melody and harmony.

Artistic freedom

But having said that, it's difficult to shake a stick at selling 15 million records and the artistic freedom that follows.

Do you find it odd that you've taught some of the biggest names in the industry and they've become more of a household name than Joe Satriani?

I don't find it odd at all. It's like me asking, 'Do you know who Bill Gates' professor was?' Civilization moves forward because the students leapfrog the teacher.

SATRIANI. Still winless after 13 nominations.

What approach do you take with your students?

When you're a teacher and you see a 16-year-old Kirk Hammett sitting across from you and he wants to know what key is this in and how can I make a really cool song, you really have to surrender everything you know!

How do you choose your next project?

There are so many projects that I have written down in this book I carry around with me. It's in a little tattered book that seems to follow me around the world. It's been with me for a long time and some very cool records have come out of that little book.

AP

Hemingway letters to Dietrich . . .

From page G1

sion for one another.

"Marlene was this firm, independent, capable human being who just happened to be a beautiful woman, (and) Hemingway brought to the table the ability to celebrate and understand women in a way that she thought was the right way," he said. "He knew how women ticked."

Hemingway once said about Dietrich: "If she had nothing more than her voice, she could break your heart with it. But she has that beautiful body and the timeless loveliness of her face. It makes no difference how she breaks your heart if she is there to mend it."

Born in 1901, Dietrich became the quintessential blonde bombshell. She struggled through the roaring 1920s in local theaters as a singer and small-time actress before her breakthrough as a vamp in the movie "The Blue Angel" in 1930.

Masterpieces

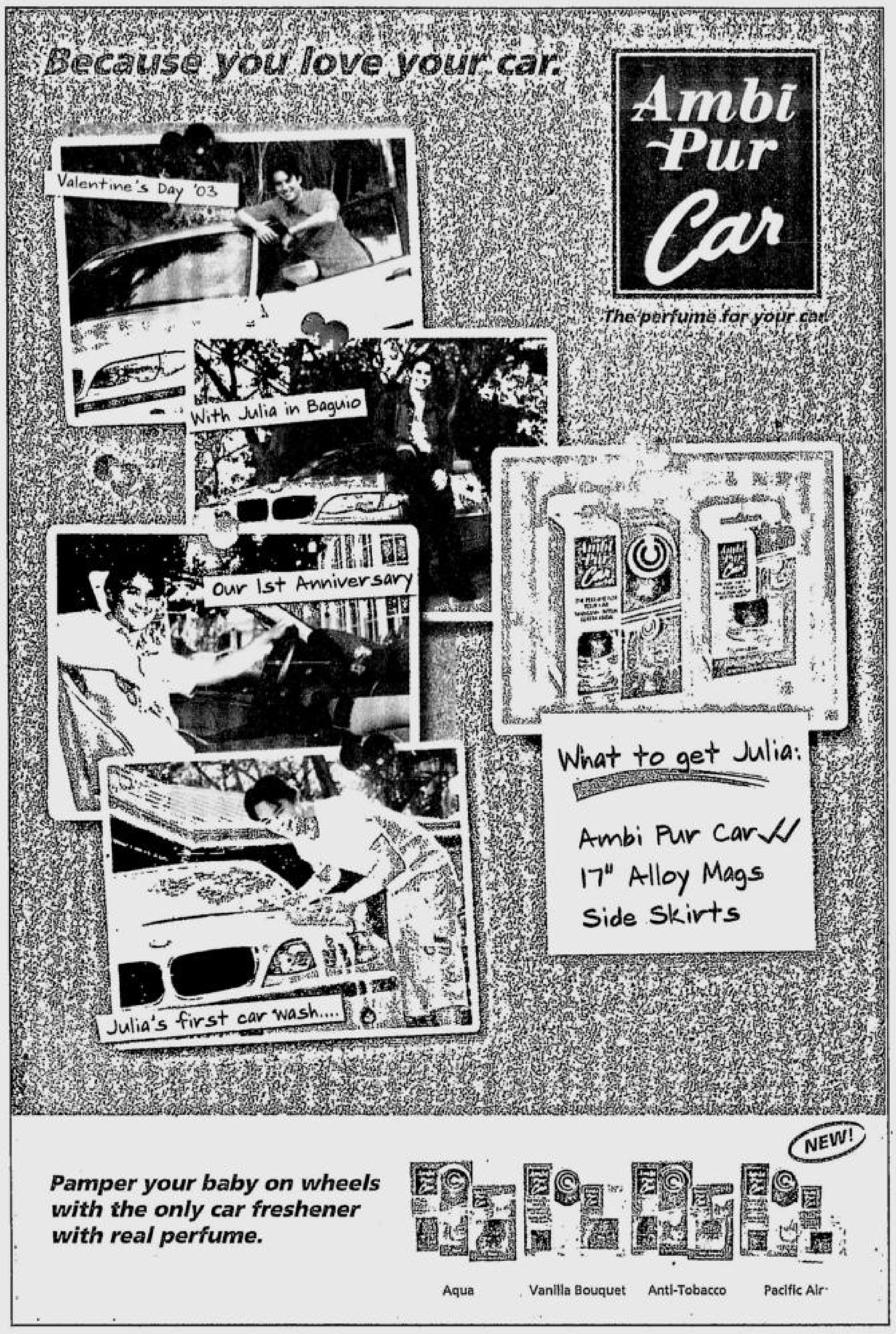
Hemingway became the second most-translated author in English after Agatha Christie with masterpieces such as "The Sun Also Rises," "For Whom the Bell Tolls," "A Farewell to Arms," and "The Old Man and the Sea," which led to a Nobel Prize in the early 1950s.

Like his characters who exhibited grace under fire, he gained a reputation for drinking and womanizing (he married four times) and became a larger-than-life expatriate on the frontlines of battlefields and bullfighting rings. He committed suicide at age 61.

The donation comprises 30 letters, cards and other documents that both Hemingway and his wife, Mary, wrote to Dietrich from 1949 to 1959. They were mailed from Idaho, Kenya, Italy, and other disparate postmarks.

Apart from the correspondence, the donation also includes drafts of three Hemingway stories—"Across the River and Into the Trees," "The Good Lion," and "The Story of the Faithful Bull"—and two Hemingway poems, "First Poem to Mary in London" and "Poem to Mary."

Peter Riva said it is believed that the other half of the correspondence—Dietrich's letters to Hemingway—may still be in Cuba, where the author lived for several years. An effort is under way to bring more of the author's property back to the United States from the communist Caribbean island nation. Reuters



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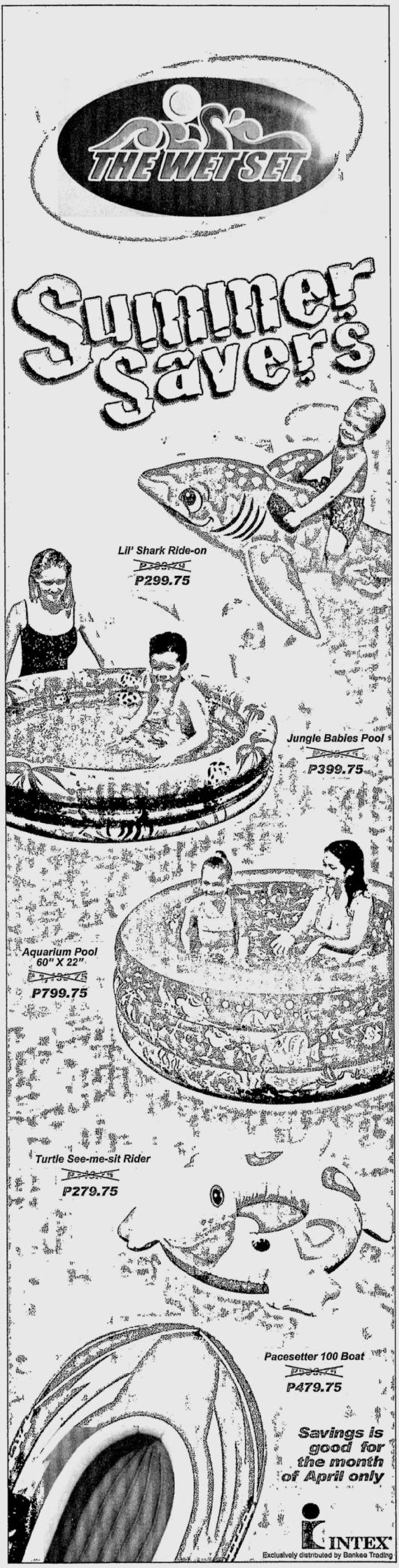

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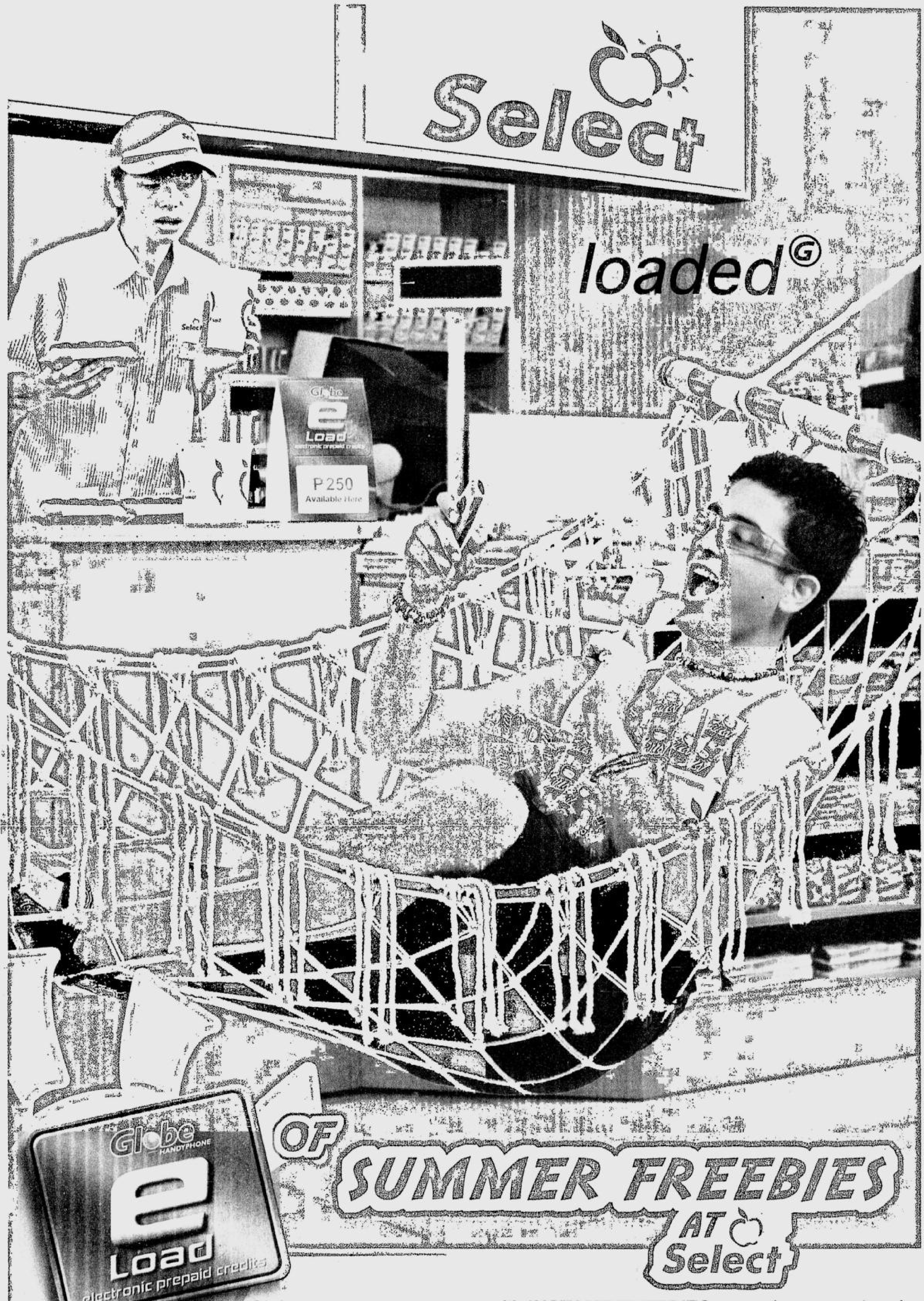
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SATURDAY*Special*

Gone for a whole month, Letterman returns with jokes about his ailment

By Frazier Moore

NEW YORK—After five weeks on sick leave, David Letterman returned to host CBS' "The Late Show" acting happy, jazzed and just a little bit wacky.

"I am still under the influence of high-powered pharmaceuticals," he explained Monday. "If it turns out the show goes great, I've still got the guy's number."

Infection

Letterman has been recuperating from a painful case of shingles, an infection of the nerve roots caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox.

"It hurt so much, I was Michael Jackson-crazy," Dave raved.

With that in mind, the evening's Top 10 List summed up all the good things about shingles. It was a list of just one statement declaring there is nothing good about shingles—but expressing that sentiment in far more colorful terms.

With a series of guest hosts subbing for him since Feb. 26, Letterman may have been out of sight, but he hasn't been out of touch.

"You know how they cured my shingles?" he asked in a sly reference to the nation's current state of alert: "Duct tape!"

Proud smirk

Then, with a proud smirk, he added, "Thirty days it took me to get over the shingles—and according to (Secretary of Defense) Donald Rumsfeld, that's right on schedule."

He welcomed as his first guest Billy Crystal, who with dread amusement recalled his own case of shingles.

"I couldn't put a sheet on me!" said Crystal, who then took a close look at Letterman's eyes and chuckled, "Hey, you're really waxed!"

For Letterman, who turns 56 on April 12, the evening was a loopier version of the joyous welcome he got in February 2000, when he returned to the Ed Sullivan Theater after missing five weeks for heart bypass surgery. At the time he brought onstage his six doctors and two nurses from New York-Presbyterian Hospital and tearfully thanked them for saving his life.

Monday night, pretending to get emotional, he introduced his dermatologist who diagnosed and treated his shingles.

"I'm back from my annual bypass!" Dave told his fans.

AP

Polanski's Oscar win may ease filmmaking for exile

By Anthony Breznican

POLANSKI. Should be able to attract A-list stars more easily than ever.

LOS ANGELES—Roman Polanski's surprise Oscar win for directing "The Pianist" has returned Hollywood's attention to a filmmaking career that includes at least two films considered cinematic classics, "Rosemary's Baby" and "Chinatown."

Tremendous interest

"There is tremendous interest in Roman and what he's doing next," his agent, Jeff Berg, said Tuesday, although Polanski has yet to decide on a new project.

Berg refused to say who has approached him about working with Polanski, but pointed out that the filmmaker has never wanted for celebrity colleagues, even in the years since a 1977 sex crime made him flee to France.

Walter Matthau starred in Polanski's 1986 comedy "Pirates," Harrison Ford in 1988's "Frantic" and Johnny Depp in 1999's "The Ninth Gate."

With a hit on his hands, the 69-year-old Polanski should be able to attract A-list stars more easily than ever. "Actors are used to traveling," Berg said.

Deeply moved

In a brief statement issued in Paris, Polanski said, "I am deeply moved to be rewarded for the work which relates to the events so close to my own life, the events that led me to comprehend that art can transform pain."

"The Pianist" drew on Polanski's experiences from childhood. A Polish Jew, he escaped from Krakow's ghetto and lived off the charity of strangers until reuniting with his father years later. His mother died at the Auschwitz death camp. Polanski's pregnant wife, Sharon Tate, was brutally murdered by Charles Manson's followers in 1969 in her Los Angeles home.

AP

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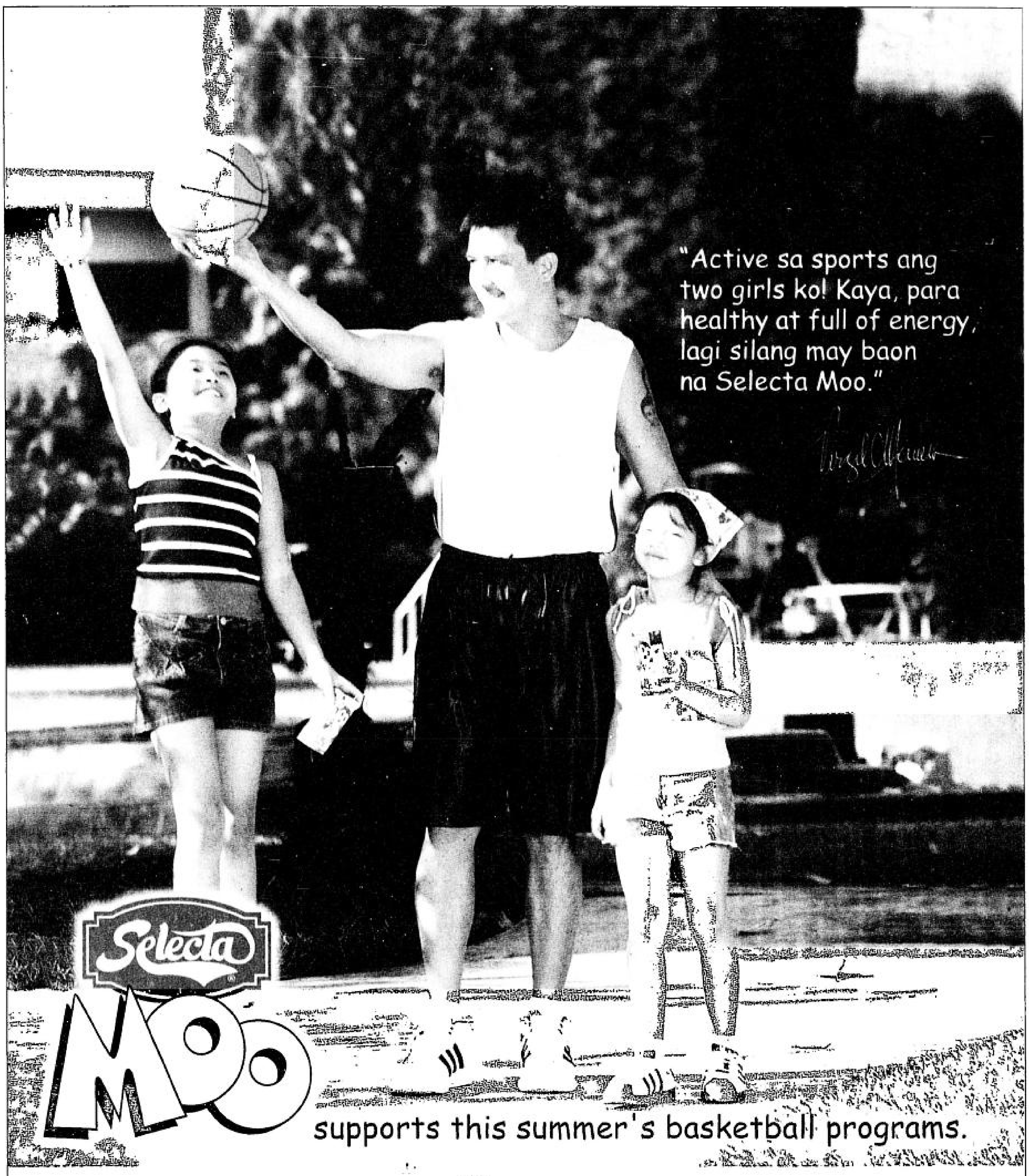
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'Magnificat' in pre-Holy Week staging tonight

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IN the course of its successful run, Ryan Cayabyab's hit religious musical, "Magnificat," has showcased the performance as the Blessed Virgin Mary of only four outstanding singer-actresses—Pinky Marquez, Dulce, Jingle Buena and Rossana Ordoñez.

Pinky and Dulce alternated in the lead role when the musical was first performed, and inspired the other members of the cast not only with their talent, but also with their devotion to the musical, and their humility.

When Dulce left the show, Jingle Buena, an original member of the cast, was tapped to play Mary in some performances, and her work was also impressive. Later, Rosanna (now Tex) Ordoñez also moved up and performed the plum role, to similar acclaim.

The production is grateful to all four exceptional singer-actresses for keeping the show's level of performance high through the years.

Tonight at the Cuneta Astrodome, "Magnificat" will be presented anew in a fundraising performance sponsored by ABC Media Resources, and Jingle will play the role of Mary.

She is thrilled to once again portray the mother of Jesus Christ, a role that tops her list of musical-theater portrayals in terms of significance, challenge and personal commitment.

Playing the similarly challenging role of Jesus is Rito Asilo, who shares Jingle's personal relationship with "Magnificat" and its inspiring themes. The musical means so much to him that he's "ready to drop everything to perform in it, anytime, anywhere!"

The cast of "Magnificat" is particularly happy to perform the show tonight because it's a pre-Holy Week presentation that they hope will help viewers focus on the passion of Christ, and on Mary's devotion to her Son and to His all-important mission in the world. ABC Media may be reached at 895-7709 and 896-4074.

Boob-tube booboos

Host: You have a very beautiful resort! Can you tell us what is its unique selling factor compared to other resorts?

Owner: Well, for one thing, it's very lushly in plantation!

(Huh?—Oh, it has lots of plants! Keep it simple, please.)

* * *

Host: How can bus companies and jeepney associations help in finally solving the huge traffic problem, and in keeping fares down?

Guest: A big way to solve transportation problems is if transport associations will decide to cooperativize!

(Cooperativize?—We said, keep it simple!)

* * *

Host: If a young women who's single finds herself pregnant, should she insist that her boyfriend marries her?

Guest: Not so clear because, what if she does not really love him for a lifetime? If she insists, which it *mali!*

(*Ano daw?!*)

* * *

Host: Why did you decide to record this particular song as the carrier single of your new album?

Singer: Because it's a beautiful song that expresses all sorts of emotions related to heartache and heartbake, and things like that!

(Heartache and heartbake?—*Bago 'yon, a!*)

* * *

Host: Your show is about to open next week. Are you nervous?

Guest: Oh, yes!

Host: How nervous?

Guest: I have butterflies on my stomach!

(Don't move, they might fly away!)

* * *

Host: Can you describe your new show?

Guest: Well, it's chatrical in nature.

(Chatrical?—Oh, theatrical! Pronounce more carefully, please.)

* * *

Host: Who can compete in the contest that your group is sponsoring?

Guest: All can compete, except those now enshined in our Hall of Fame.

(Rise and shine!)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Ano ang* symbol *ng* sign *na* Leo?

Contestant: July!

(No, Lion!)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Anong S ang inuupuan ng* rider *sa* likod *ng kabayo*?

Contestant: *Silya!*

(No, saddle!)

* * *

Host: Ask our viewers to buy your new album.

Singer: Yes, thank you—please support my new album, it's now out of the market!

(Poor you!)

Senakulo at CCP

On its 15th season, Tanghalang Santa Ana and the Mobile Theater Foundation (Manila) Inc., in cooperation with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, presents the Holy Week production, "Ang Martir sa Golgota," at the CCP Main Theater on Sunday, April 13, with matinee and evening performances at 3 and 8 p.m.

In a contemporary twist, the play intertwines the biblical story with a mosaic of current Philippine issues in the political, social and economic spheres.

"Ang Martir sa Golgota" is directed by actor-councilor Luciano "Lou" M. Veloso (6th District, Manila).

Noted talents like movie-TV actors Romnick Sarmenta, Jojo Bolado and Russel Sorillo essay important roles. Admission is free. Call 522-4925.

Feedback

Danny Holmsen writes to greet Don Romeo S. Villonco and Jose Laurel IV on their recent birthday (April 10):

"The V in LVN Pictures stands for Villonco. One of his children, Cherrie Pie, was a top model. Don Romeo is religious and generous. He also thinks that God the Father is being overlooked, so I hear that he's planning to build a church in His particular honor, and a CD dedicated to the Father is in the planning stage.

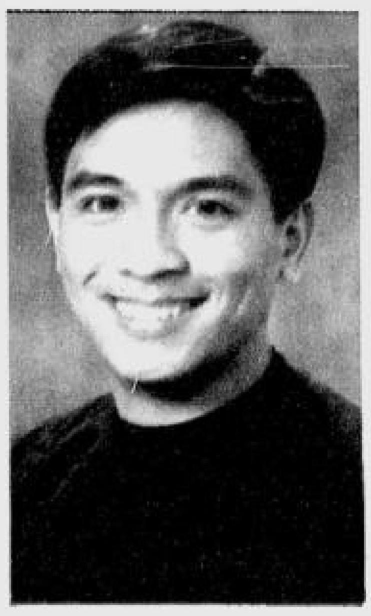
"As for Jose Laurel IV, he's a direct descendant of Pres. Laurel. He was a congressman and ambassador, but has retired to spend more time with his family. We both grew up in Paco and celebrated our birthday separately, although we lived only a block away from each other—until we finally compromised and threw joint parties!"

Family entertainment venues

This summer, take your kids to amusement centers like Dreamscape (Robinsons Galleria) and Dream Zone (Robinsons Place Manila).

The newly-refurbished Dreamscape is a family entertainment venue that offers fun rides like the Super Sonic V roller-coaster, Thunder Cruiser, Roaring Rapids, Speed Bug bump cars, Grand Parade carousel, Dream Wheel, Rainbow Racers, and more than 150 video arcade games, network gaming machines and redemption games.

For its part, Dream Zone has a varied selection of video games, videoke rooms and booths, and redemption booths offering prizes. Open from 12 noon to 8 p.m. on weekdays, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends. All rides are checked daily by Robinsons Recreation Corp. for maintenance and safety.



ASILO. Plays Jesus in Cayabyab's religious musical.

VELOSO. Directs "Ang Martir sa Golgota" at CCP.

Co-workers see a bright future ahead for Yul Servo

By Agnes P. de Guzman and Ronald G. Mangubat

FOR someone who is relatively new in the entertainment industry, actor Yul Servo has already earned the respect of a lot of his co-workers. "Blame" it on his exceptional talent, right attitude, a good manager, and sheer luck.

SERVO. Exceptional talent.

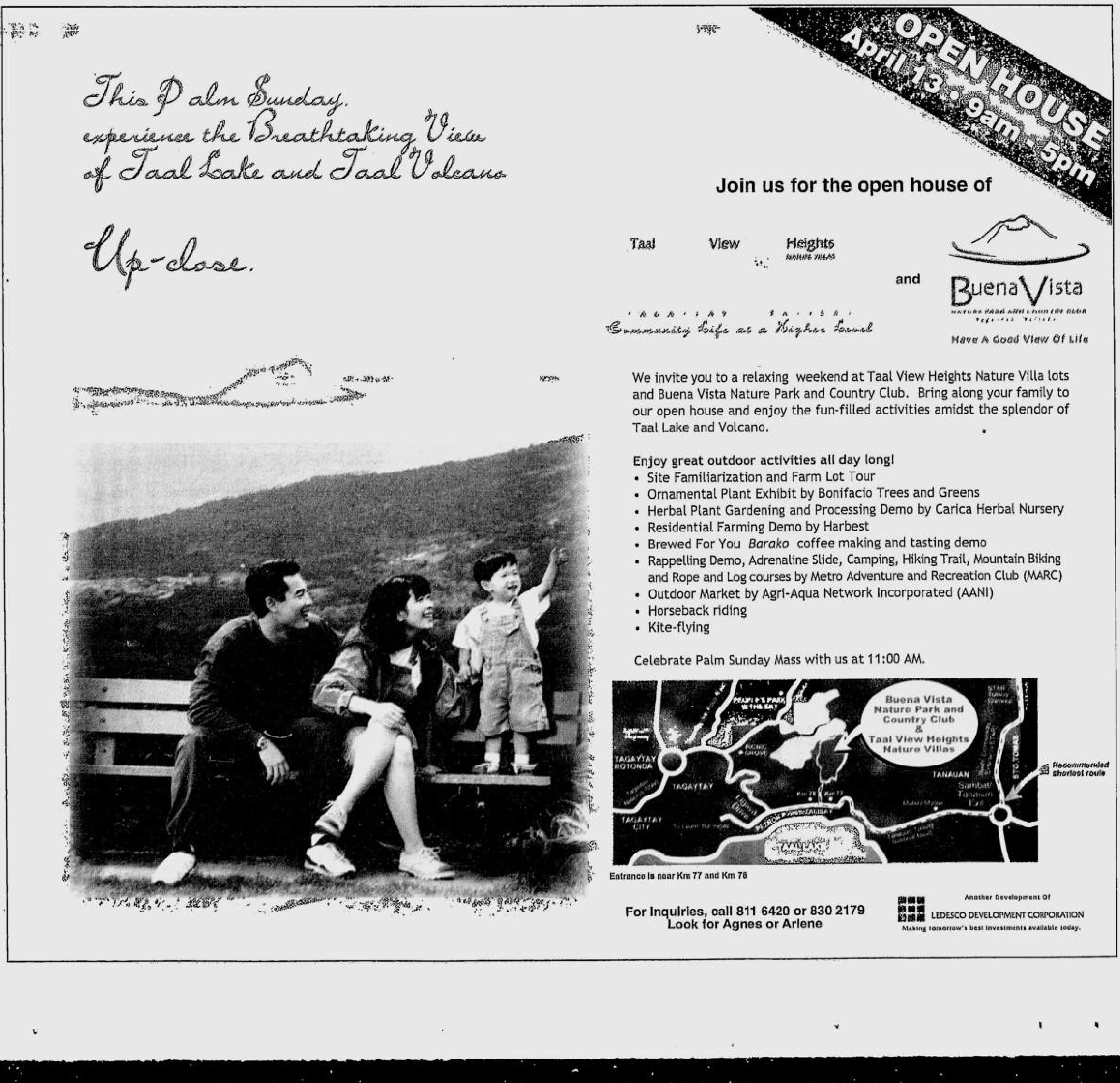
Awards

After acting in only two movies, this simple Bulakeño and criminology graduate has already won three best actor awards. For "Batang West Side," Servo won as Best Actor in both the Cinemanila and Brussels International Film Festivals. For his second film "Laman," Servo was named best actor at the Star Awards for Movies.

When he was first introduced to director Maryo J. de los Reyes, Servo rarely spoke. *"At ang payat-payat niya, para syang daga,"* direk Maryo jokingly recalls. "But he had very expressive eyes. I knew he has the potential to become a good actor."

The packaging began: *Direk* Maryo sent him to the gym to build up his body. He also attended acting workshops. Then came the offer to appear in "Batang West

CO-WORKERS/ H3



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Mitch Valdes gives us many reasons to laugh

By Mona Gonzalez

VALDES. Can make you guffaw even louder than she does.

I HAVE just made a discovery: If I were to look for a good night's entertainment, I would eschew music. Not that there's anything wrong with a good song. Music can lull, relax, soothe.

Giggly feeling

But I'd rather laugh. Songs you can hear on the radio, or play on the CD. But laughter produces ripples of memory—long after the show.

And yet, laughter without music is easily forgotten. Deep down inside, we are still children. We all prefer a joke with a song.

That's why I like watching Mitch Valdes' shows. She can make you guffaw even louder than she does (and that's saying quite a lot). Then, she can lull—or sometimes, rock—you with a song.

Socialites

That's what happened last March 17 in the show, "Mitch at Merk's" at Greenbelt 3, Makati.

In Mitch's show, she remembered her old haunts along Roxas blvd.—Flames, Eduardos, Rene's. *et al.*; the old bands and singers—Joey Smith, Circus, Pilita, Carmen Patena; the old "happenings."

British accent

But "Mitch at Merk's" was not just about remembering. She talked about the funny side of cable TV, replete with British accent (the news sounds better that way, she says).

Then Mitch talked about a typical coffee shop in New York (and a typical waitress), and the difficulty of ordering food amid so many choices. Finally, she told the audience what it's like to get a mammogram. In great detail. Yes, that *can* be funny, too. In fact, it was the night's highlight. She really brought the house down!

Mitch is great mimic, a talented singer with a powerful voice, and a happy dancer. Her show was fast-paced, so although it was long, the hours had a way of flying.

Lighthearted look

Mitch provides a lighthearted look at ourselves—the way we used to be, and what's going on in our lives now. There's even a peek into our future possibilities.

Eschewing Saddam, Iraq, bombs, in-fighting, gossip, office intrigue, the hole in our pocket, the fact that you just hate your job or are in desperate need of one, Mitch will make you forget—but not take you away.

She'll point your sights on the lighter side of life, and focus on things that are funny and true. She'll give you a reason to laugh, and leave you with enough songs to remember—long after the show has ended.

Next Bond girl?

From page H4

national agency he said had approached Rai, a former Miss World.

Discussions were reportedly delayed after Rai fractured her leg in a car accident on the set of her latest movie. The casting scouts were on the set when the accident occurred, Singh said, according to the Times.

Singh's phone went unanswered through Friday.

Hospital

Rai is currently recovering in a hospital in Bombay, home to the world's most prolific movie industry known as Bollywood.

Rai, popularly known as "Ash," recently starred in "Devdas," a film about doomed love that was India's Oscar entry in the foreign film category.

She had earlier told reporters that she was in talks with studios in the United States and was planning a Hollywood movie. this year. AP

Co-workers see . . .

From page H2

Side."

Director Lav Diaz recalls: " I didn't know anything about him, so gamble *talaga 'yon*. But after eight long months of shooting in New York, *naintindihan nyang maigi ang* character *na pino*-portray *niya*, that's why he was able to deliver."

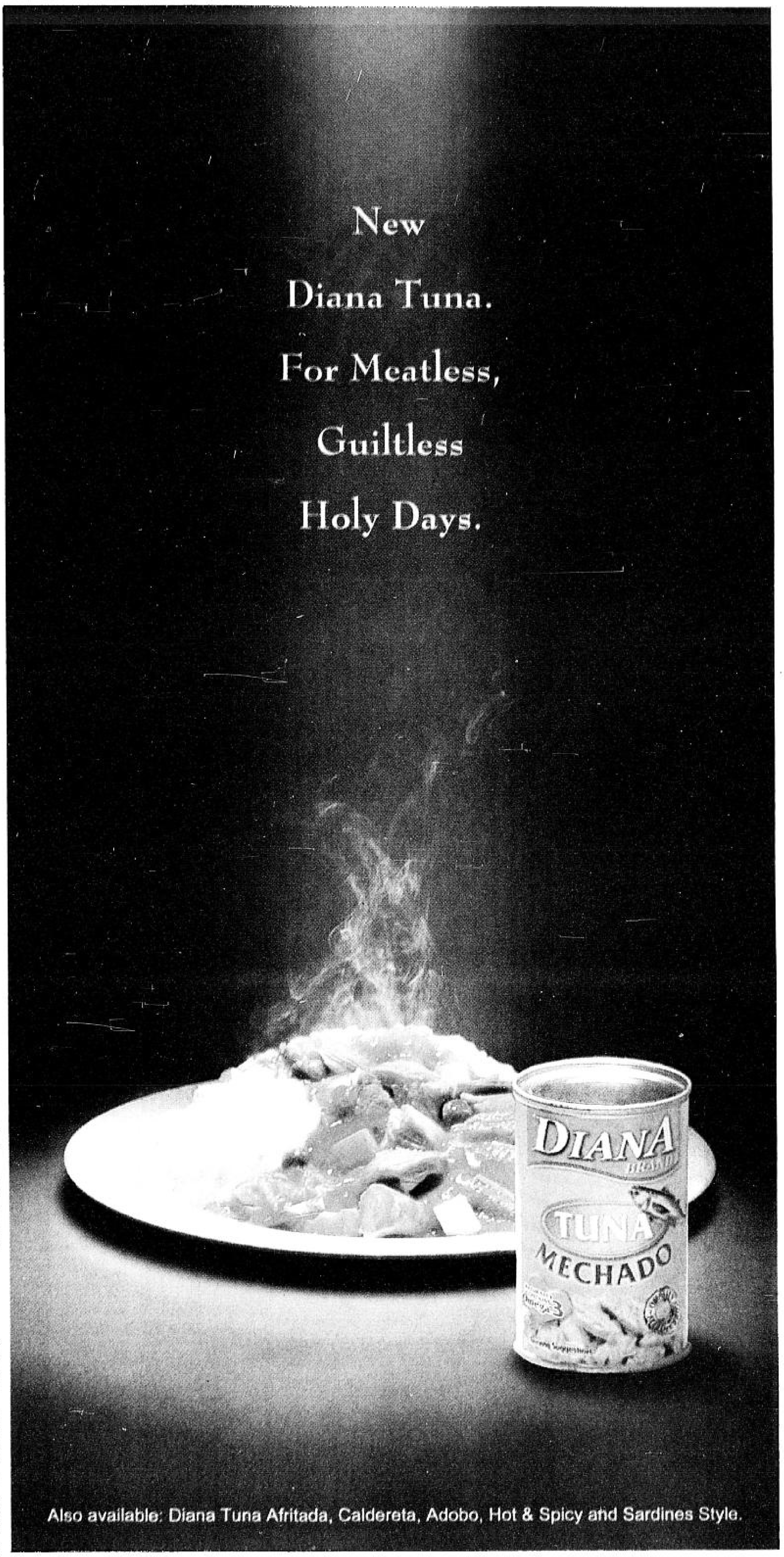
Another person who has fond memories of Servo in New York is Joanne Bañaga, who was part of the production team of "Batang West Side." Bañaga recalls that it was Servo's first time in the Big Apple and he was awed by everything he saw.

Serious actor

But, he was also a serious actor in the making. "*Bibili siya ng mga* tapes *nina* Al Pacino *at* Dustin Hoffman *at pinag-aaralan niya ang mga pelikula nila.*"

Albert Martinez, who has worked with Servo in "Laman," describes his co-star as quiet and deep. "He comes to the set prepared. he memorizes his lines, and he has a passion for acting."

Yul's colleagues predict that he will become an important actor in Philippine cinema. But they advise him to choose his roles well, have the right attitude—and sustain his passion!



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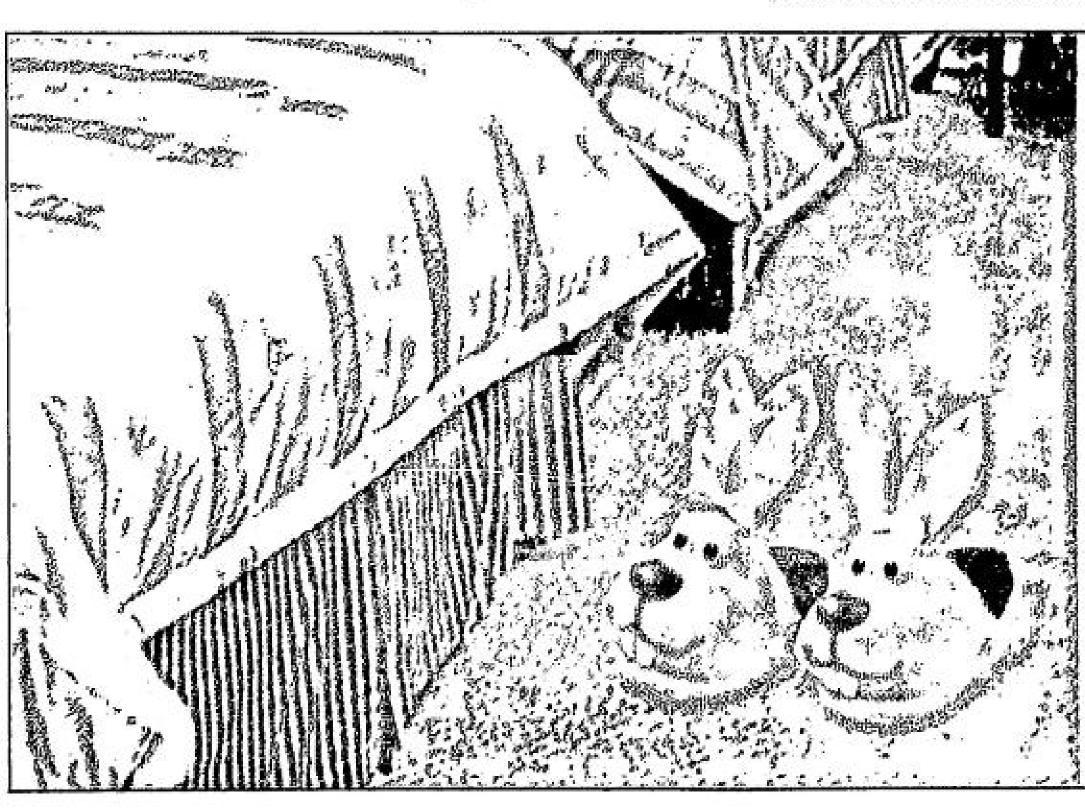

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Next Bond girl?

TOP Indian film star and former Miss World Aishwarya Rai may appear in the next James Bond movie.
AFP

BOMBAY, India—India's movie star Aishwarya Rai may be the next Bond girl, a newspaper report said Friday last week.

"They're keen to cast her," Rai's secretary Hari Singh was quoted as saying by The Times of India newspaper about an inter-

NEXT / H3

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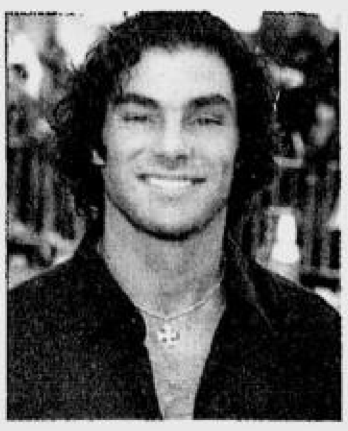

AT left, Lorenzo Lamas hosts "Are You Hot?" Center, Evan Marriott is "Joe Millionaire." And in the right photo, Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson make up panel of judges in "American Idol."

TV has become an arena for amateurs

By Frazier Moore

NEW YORK—Used to be, when something was inadequate or downright lame, you would dismiss it as "amateurish."

"Man," you'd sneer, "that was amateur hour!"

But on American television these days, amateurism is in full flower—and applauded.

Lacerating approval

"Amateur hour" literally describes "Star Search" and, of course, the hit "American Idol," where each Whitney Houston knockoff faces Simon Cowell's lacerating appraisal.

But TV's rank amateurism has its grip on unscripted-but-staged fare overall, the sort of programming that can confer instant stardom on such gloriously unaccomplished amateurs as Evan ("Joe Millionaire") Marriott.

Amateurism even accounts for the collaborative role widely granted to viewers in this age of interactive media.

"We want to know what *you* think," the audience is told, with no expertise required—or much else. (Any viewer with a pulse and a telephone will be recognized by "American Idol," right along with its professionally knowledgeable judges.)

Identity crisis

A decade ago, critic James Wolcott wrote a piece for The New Yorker magazine lamenting the "identity crisis" with which TV entertainment was afflicted: "The barriers between professional and amateur have been eaten away. Anybody can get into the act."

What set him off in December 1993—notably the skanky guests populating daytime talk—is yesterday's news. But Wolcott may have been prescient when he imagined "in a few years the hour-long primetime drama itself will be a rare species, replaced by cheaper, 'reality' programming." The situation he diagnosed then is today an epidemic.

TV mainstays like "Cops," "Real World" and "World's Funniest Home Videos" have been joined by ever more opportunities for ordinary people to get into the act. You can eat a horse's rectum on "Fear Factor" or audition soul mates on a dating game. You can wage high-stakes exhibitionism in a house ("Big Brother") or in the wilds ("Survivor").

On "Are You Hot?" you can stand in your skivvies before Hotness Czar Lorenzo Lamas while he deconstructs your abs with his laser-beam Flaw Finder.

What a godsend these shows are for the networks! Scripted dramas and comedies make such extravagant demands on a production budget. "Reality TV" alleviates the need for those costly performers and those pesky writers and directors!

Rain forest

Nonetheless, certain TV professionals are unwilling to leave amateurism to the amateurs. Behold battling demi-stars like Emmanuel Lewis or Melissa Rivers as they share a house ("The Surreal Life") or an Australian rain forest ("I'm a Celebrity—Get Me Out of Here!") in an effort to demonstrate that, at heart, they're just as ordinary as you.

In short, the barriers have been eaten away. And, for the moment, the New Egalitarianism is a smash.

Rather than the distancing effect the audience might feel from a truly skillful performance (the entertainer can do something the audience can't), the new TV paradigm puts the audience on par with the entertainers, as everyone sinks to amateur status.

Sure, fans of so-called reality TV defend it for its underlying truth. Ryan Sutter, the chosen mate of Trista Rehn on "The Bachelorette," explained its appeal (if a bit redundantly) as "real people with real feelings and real emotions."

But the truth is, storytelling on "reality TV" observes the same traditions as any scripted show.

For instance, Evan gave "Joe Millionaire" a heartwarming finish by choosing the "good" girl (Zora) over the "bad" girl (Sarah). Not the least bit believable, it was the sort of comfy, satisfying ending you've seen a thousand times before. And it proves that the best way to enjoy reality TV is with the age-old prescription for watching any drama: a willing suspension of disbelief.

> The new paradigm puts the audience on par with the entertainers

Resolution

How else to accept the bombshell Trista-picks-Ryan resolution of "The Bachelorette"? As depicted on the series, these two individuals have almost nothing in common. They have only a rudimentary acquaintance with each other after a courtship grounded in make-believe.

What holds this pair together?

"An unspoken chemistry," Trista told reporters last week.

That's a good explanation for TV love. But now that these lovers' TV show is over, why should we believe they exist outside of it? What makes Trista and Ryan—whoever they may be in real life—big news? *AP*

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Ledger starrer ignites debate in Australia

By Justine Toh

SYDNEY—Hollywood star Heath Ledger admits he was biased toward legendary Australian Ned Kelly, whom he portrays as a romantic, pistol-wielding hero in his latest film.

Secret admiration

But Ledger's interpretation of the 19th-century outlaw, who evokes the kind of secret admiration among Australians that Americans might have for train robber Jesse James, has reignited a debate over Kelly's place in Australian history.

Kelly has been mythologized as the champion of the Irish underdog, fighting an unjust British colonial system that favored the wealthy over the weak. But to some historians, he was nothing more than a horse-thieving murderer.

"I loved how passionate he was and I knew I could really sink my teeth into that," Ledger, an Australian, told Reuters Television. But he admitted he felt the pressure of portraying the iconic outlaw in the movie "Ned Kelly," just released in Australia and due for international release later in the year.

Kelly with his younger brother Dan and friends Joe Byrne and Steve Hart robbed banks and held towns hostage in the states of Victoria and New South Wales in the 1870s after they were outlawed, and Kelly's mother was jailed on a trumped-up charge of attempted murder of a policeman.

Showdown

At a defiant showdown with police at Glenrowan in Victoria, Kelly and his gang each donned 90 pounds (41 kg) of homemade armor hammered out of ploughshare blades and bolted together to fashion a breastplate and a helmet with a narrow slit for vision.

The rest of the gang was killed while Kelly, who was shot in the legs, arms and groin more than 20 times, was arrested and later hung for murder, despite 32,000 signatures that were collected petitioning for his release. He was 25 years old.

This is not the first film to portray Kelly as hero.

Thought to be the world's first feature length film, the 1906 silent film "The Story of the Kelly Gang" depicted the outlaw standing in his armor, guns ablazing, as police peppered him with bullets. Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger also portrayed Ned Kelly in a 1970s version, much to the chagrin of Australians.

LEDGER. Plays Ned Kelly as a romantic, pistol-wielding hero.

But historians dispute where the real Kelly ends and the myth begins, their task complicated by the fact that the debate over Kelly has raged since the outlaw first rode.

"This is a guy who was mythologized even while he was still alive," said Gregor Jordan, director of "Ned Kelly." "Whose testimony or version you listen to depends on how you formulate your opinion of him." Historian Ian Jones believes Kelly, a convicted horse thief, was an authentic Australian hero caught up in a tragic chain of events whose campaign against injustice swelled into the cause of many because his sympathizers were prevented from buying land.

Rebellion

"That was what turned the Kelly outbreak into a rebellion, because Ned was now responsible for a whole class of people who were disadvantaged because of him," Jones said.

He said Kelly was also a gentleman outlaw, reputed to be courteous to women and respectful to men, who even won over his bank hostages with rousing speeches about injustice.

But Alex McDermott, research scholar at Melbourne's La Trobe University, who wrote a thesis on Kelly, disputes that claim.

"His rhetoric and his story are so beautiful that the mistake that the public and the historians have made in the past is to accept that rhetoric at face value," he said, noting that the Kelly family's frequent run-ins with police indicate Kelly was not a blameless victim.

Though McDermott takes issue with the mythologized Kelly, he admired his ability to exploit the rhetoric of the oppressed.

"This is a bloke who has grown up living a life quite at variance with the myth, and yet when he's outlawed, he's able to use the rhetoric of Irish oppression (by the British), the myth of the noble outlaw, of past convict persecution," he said.

Self-educated

Though largely self-educated, Kelly authored a manifesto detailing the wrongs perpetrated against him and his family by police, then delivered it in a speech to his captives at a bank in Jerilderie, a rural town in NSW, during one of his hold-ups.

The "Jerilderie Letter" runs to about 8,000 impassioned words justifying Kelly's actions, along with wild threats designed to intimidate his enemies and even hints of a plan to establish a republic in Victoria for the poor and oppressed.

Though most Australians today live around or near the coast, the idea of the unforgiving bush continues to furnish Australian national identity. Kelly, exceptional horseman and master of other frontier arts, is the foremost symbol of that past. *Reuters*

Fundraising performance for 'Nasaan si Hesus?'

By Nestor U. Torre

THE CAST members of the popular religious musical revue, "Nasaan si Hesus?" are particularly happy to perform the show when it's a fundraiser for a parish project.

Proceeds

On Saturday, May 3, the revue's singer-actors will be doing their show at the Mabuting Pastol parish at Barangay Commonwealth, QC with extra zest, because the proceeds from the benefit performance will help fund the construction of a three-story building for the parish's Mabuting Pastol Credit Cooperative.

The MPCC is a parish-based association of urban poor families who are beneficiaries of the National Government Center Housing Project, a socialized housing project of the government.

The cooperative was registered at the Cooperative Development Authority in 1998. It started as a savings initiative of the parish's Pastoral Council's Committee on Livelihood and Health headed by Lina Untalan.

Training ground

At present, the cooperative has 216 coop members. It also serves as training ground for more than 1,000 savings depositors who are prospective members.

Its services include savings, loans for income-generating projects, scholarships, loans for house construction, payment of home lots, and affordable medicines for indigent families.

A strong continuing education program stresses value formation, seminars, meetings and grassroots participation in the parish's Basic Ecclesial Communities.

Strengths

The MPCC's strengths are the commitment and devotion of its officers, management staff and members, who actively participate in its projects through the Buklod-Koop in each of the parish's 15 pastoral communities. Mabuting Pastol's well-loved parish priest is Fr. Guido Everaert, CICM.

As the MPCC continues to grow, the need for a bigger space for the cooperative has become urgent. The MPCC has negotiated with the Housing Guarantee Corporation for the lease of land for its building.

The building will serve as a venue for the coop business operations, education and training, value formation, meetings and other activities of the cooperative. For tickets, call Naty Martinez at 639179100665 and Pheng Raagas at 09193866503.

FR. Guido Everaert, CICM, is Mabuting Pastol's well-loved parish priest.

Donations

Donations for the construction of the three-story building are now being accepted. For its counterpart, the cooperative is sponsoring the May 3 performance of "Nasaan Si Hesus?"

The entertaining and inspiring religious show is produced by Mrs. Lourdes "Bing" Pimentel, who also composed its songs. It dramatizes the real-life problems and conflicts that Christians face, as well as some possible solutions.

The musical revue's cast is made up of some of the country's best musical-theater talents, like Andy Bais, Rito Asilo, Joel Villaflor, Shiela Asuncion, Arlene Borja, Catherine Estabillo, Ana Feleo, Angeli Mae Flores, Niña Arao, Janice Cruz, Ray Manalo, Jazmin Flores and Janna Villaflor.

The Mabuting Pastol parish is on Pilot Drive, NGCHP, Brgy. Commonwealth, QC. Tel. no. 461-36-27. E-mail: mpcc598@yahoo.com.

Other performances

Other performances of "Nasaan si Hesus?" are on April 16 at Barangay Sacrifice Valley, Hermosa Bataan, sponsored by the Apostolic Catholic Church, and on May 10 at the second floor of MStar Mall, C.V. Starr ave., Pamplona, Las Piñas City, sponsored by the Spirit of the Living God Foundation.

If you want "Nasaan si Hesus?" performed for your parish, school, office or organization, call Nandy at 713-9323 or 0919-2065424.

MPCC founding directors, from left: Dir. Rene Baylon, Sr. Simonne Coene, ICM, Irene, chairperson Lilia P. de Leon, Dir. Precy Baquiring, Dir. Naty Martinez, board secretary Gloria Benavidez, Dir. Diosa Castro. In front, Sr. Elizel Achacoso, ICM and Dir. Neneng Palomar.

THE MPCC Buklod Koop leaders and representatives of the 15 Pastoral Communities, National Government Housing Project.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM APRIL 12 – APRIL 16

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	31
	5 30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7 00 Arriba, Arriba 8:30 Bida si Mister Bida si Misis 9 30 FPJ Action Cinema 11 00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	7.00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 11:00 Business and Leisure	7.00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Mirror, Mirror 8 00 Wow Mali! 9 00 Viva Box Office *Sumigaw Ka Hanggang Gusto Mo* 11 00 Speed	6 00 Dragon Ball Z 6 30 Imbestigador 7.30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8 30 Kakabakaba 9 30 Blockbuster Cinema 11:20 Flash Report 11.30 Master Showman	6 00 Real TV 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7 00 7 Days 8 00 Largo 9 00 Saturday Night Playhouse	5 00 PBA Provincial Game 8 00 Amazing Twins 9:00 To Be Announced 10.00 Bakbakan sa Maynila	5 00 Combat Mission 7:00 Game Plan 7 30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9 30 Studio 23 Presents 11.30 Real Deal	7 00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9 00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9 30 Armor of God 10 00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	5 30 CBS Evening News 6 00 E! News Weekend 7 00 Celebrity Profile 8 00 E! True Hollywood Story 10 00 David Letterman 11.00 Wild On
	5 30 Sharon 7 00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Home Along Da Riles 9 30 Sunday Family Cinema 11 30 Dong Puno Nightly 12.00 The Weekend News	5 00 PBA Games 9.00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 11.00 Unlimited Driving	5 00 Zorro 6 30 Guyferd 7 00 Ispup 8 00 Sing-Galing 9 00 Viva Cine Idols *Ipagpalawad Mo* 11 00 Speed	5 30 Partners Mel & Jay 7.00 Ki 8:30 Daddy Di Do Du 9.30 Sunday Night Box Office *First Strike* 11:20 Flash Report 11.30 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6 00 Entertainment This Weekend 7 00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8 00 Match TV 9 00 Sunday's Big Event 11.00 Sunday Report	5 00 PBA Games 9.30 Global Family Series 11.00 El Shaddai	6 00 Jimmy Neutron 6 30 Futurama 7 00 Digital Tour 7 30 Spy TV 8 00 Yes Dear 8 30 Just Shoot Me 9 00 Will & Grace 9 30 The West Wing 10 30 Scariest Places on Earth 11 30 News Central	7 00 Sunday Mini-Series 8.00 Oh Tokyo 9.00 Sunday Night movies	5 30 CBS Evening News 6 00 E! Coming Attractions 6 30 FYE 7 00 E! Original Specials 8.00 Rank 9 00 Revealed w/ Jules Asner 10 00 Movies on E!
	6 00 TV Patrol 6:30 Game K N B? 7:30 Bituin 8.00 Darating Ang Umaga 8 30 Kay Tagal Kang Hinitay 9 00 Alias 10.30 Night Visions 11.00 Headlines 11 30 The Correspondents	6.00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 7 00 AMLA TV Special 8 00 TeleDyaryo 10.00 PBL	6 00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 F 7:00 Mahha Go Go Go 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 That 70s Show 9.00 On Air 9:30 Misadventures of Maverick and Ariel 10:00 The Big News 10 30 *Jesus I*	6 00 Frontpage 6 40 Habang Kapiling Ka 7 20 Ang Iibigin Ay Ikaw 8 00 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8 40 Kung Mawawala Ka 9 20 Da Boy and Da Girl 10 30 Saksi 11.00 I-Witness	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6 00 Wyred 6.30 Hot Ticket 7.00 Simpsons 8 00 Jag 9.00 24 10 00 Newswatch Now 10.30 Sex & the City	6.30 NBA Jam 7 00 NBA 2000 9:30 Global Family Series 10 30 IBC News Tonite 11.00 Linawin Natin	6 00 TV Patrol 7 00 Batman Beyond 7 30 Samurai X 8 00 Bully 9 00 Charmed 10 00 News Central 10.30 Oprah	6 30 Q Showcase 7.30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9.00 Ang Dating Daan	6 00 E! News Live 7.00 Behind The Scenes 7.30 Mysteries & Scandals 8 00 E! True Hollywood Story 9.00 E! News Live 10 00 Best of Late Show 11.00 Wild On
	6 00 TV Patrol 6 30 Game K N B? 7:30 Bituin 8 00 Darating Ang Umaga 8 30 Kay Tagal Kang Hinitay 9 00 OK Fine! Whatever 10 30 Headlines 11.00 Mission X	6 00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 8 00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 11.00 Auto Focus	6 00 Balitang-Balita 6 30 Dragon League 7 00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 Brain Freeze 9 00 E.R. 10 00 The Big News 10 30 *Jesus II*	6 00 Frontpage 6 40 Habang Kapiling Ka 7.20 Ang Iibigin Ay Ikaw 8.00 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8 40 Kung Mawawala Ka 9 20 Kool Ka Lang 10:30 Saksi 11 00 Probe Team	5 30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6.00 Wyred 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7 00 Ed 8.00 Ally McBeal 9.00 The Practice 10 00 Newswatch Now 10.30 Real TV	6:00 Game Channel 7.00 To Be Announced 9.30 Global Family Series 10:30 IBC News Tonite	6 00 TV Patrol 7 00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Samurai X 8 00 Dawson's Creek 9 00 Smallville 10 00 News Central 10.30 Oprah 11.30 Twilight Zone	6 30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan	6 00 E! News Live 7.00 Extreme Close Up 7:30 Mysteries and Scandals 8 00 E! True Hollywood Story 9 00 E! News Live 10 00 David Letterman 11 00 Wild On
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	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	GOOD FRIDAY

Eating healthy at Gloria Maris

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

A FEW years back, the most popular Chinese restaurant was Kowloon House. Dishes like sweet and sour pork, *camaron rebosado, pata tim* and fried rice were diners' top choices. Our Chinese restaurants have come a long, long way since then.

Truly authentic

Today, many Chinese restaurants have sprouted all over, but only a handful can be considered truly authentic.

It has become common practice for those restaurants to employ chefs from Hong Kong. This is one of the surest ways of acquiring that authentic taste. Importing some ingredients has also become standard.

I remember, every Christmas season, Dr. Joey De Los Santos and Atty. Rey Francisco would reserve a table for us at Gloria Maris restaurant in Greenhills. There, we would have Shanghai crab (this is a must when they have it).

The moment the dish arrived, all conversation would stop and it was as if we didn't know each other. We would only talk again when the bill arrived. Those were some of my most memorable meals!

Dinner

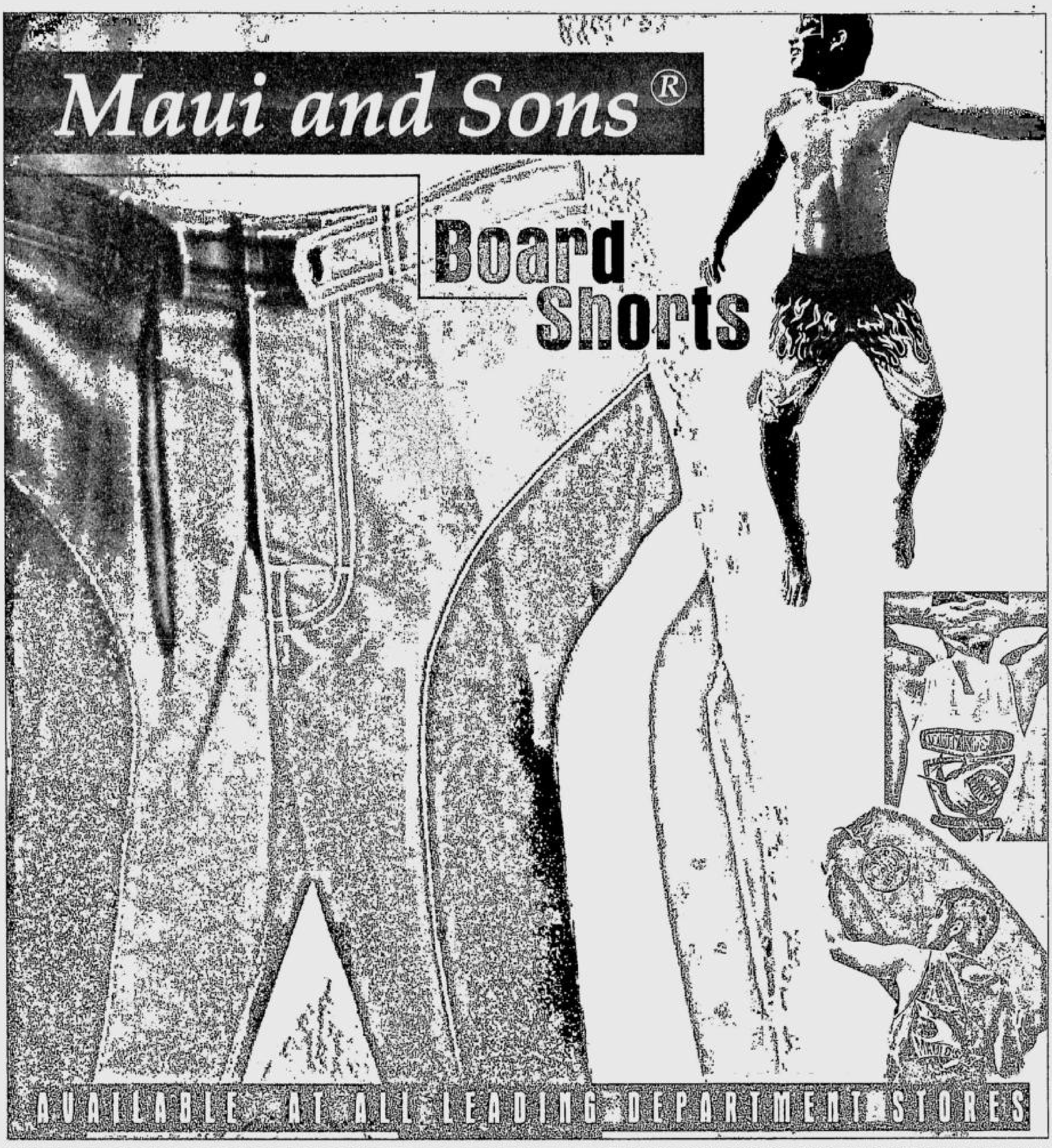
There are two restaurants I consider consistently authentic: North Park and Gloria Maris. We had dinner at the Gloria Maris branch along Timog the other day. Not wanting to waste the great badminton workout we just had, I tried to order healthy dishes.

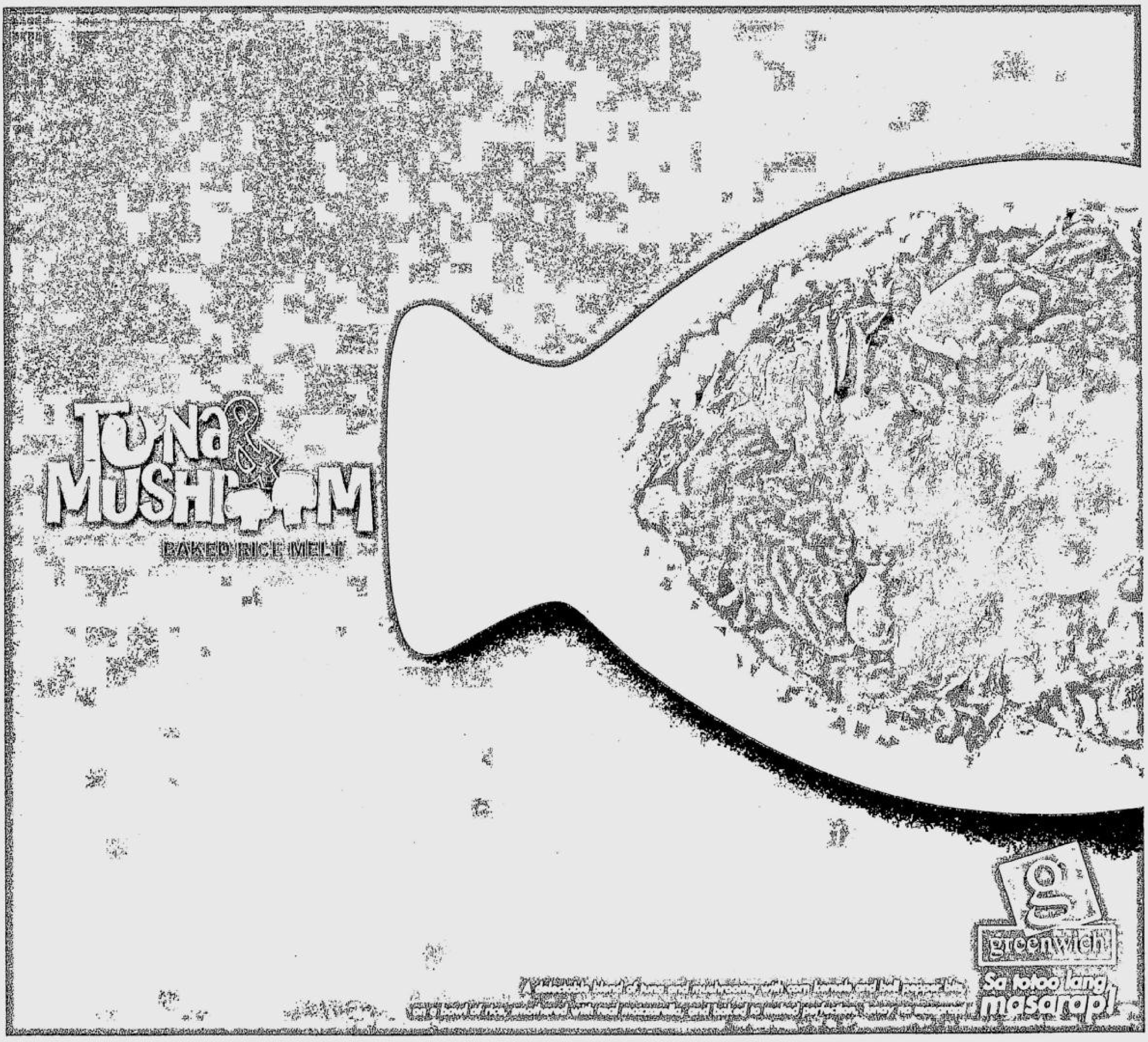
We started with the Chicken feet with black beans. Super *sarap*! I use this as a basis for determining the prospects of our coming dishes.

We then ordered a nicely-cooked *kangkong* with Chinese *bagoong*. It had the mild aroma of *bagoong* and was not only delicious, but healthy as well. We also had Bean curd roll, vegetables in a thin slice of bean curd, steamed and served in a bamboo steamer.

The Fish brisket in beancurd hot pot was a saucy dish that had mushrooms, fish filets,

EATING/14





Sangandaan festival features performances, exhibits

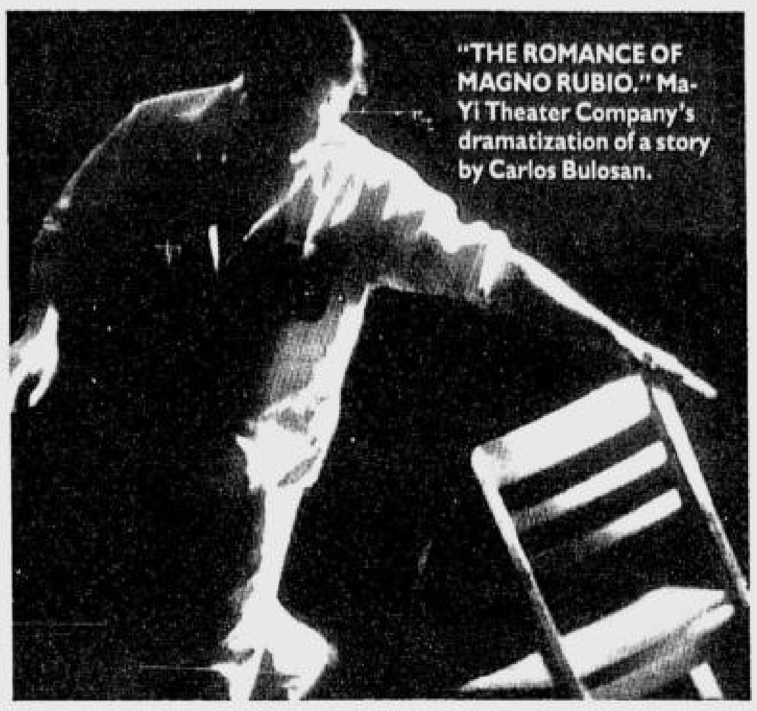
PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL SINGERS. Performing in "Kung Hindi Man (Isang Gabi ng Kundiman)."

By Nestor U. Torre

ASIDE from exhibits, the CCP and NCCA's Sangandaan festival starting this July will feature a number of theatrical and dance presentations on the Fil-American relationship and experience.

Staging

The performances start on July 11 with the staging of "Oraciones" at the Little Theater. Playwrights Rene Villanueva, Liza Magtoto, Rody Vera and Nick Pichay interpret Filipino-American relations from the turn of the century to the present, through first American Secretary of the Interior Dean C. Worcester; a Filipina suffragette; a Hukbalahap peasant; "Apocalypse Now" director Francis Ford Coppola, and Kris Aquino. Performances run until Aug. 3.



"THE ROMANCE OF MAGNO RUBIO." Ma-Yi Theater Company's dramatization of a story by Carlos Bulosan.

"The Romance of Magno Rubio" is a production of the New York City-based Ma-Yi Theater Company. Lonnie Carter based his script on a short story by Carlos Bulosan. Magno Rubio is a Filipino field hand in the States who dreams of an American woman he knows only through letters. Loy Arcenas directs. Performances run from July 16 to 27.

COPPOLA. Featured as a character in "Oraciones."

Musical revue

"Carnaval de Manila" is a musical revue featuring performances and images from the Sangandaan festival. At 8 p.m. on July 6 at the Folk Arts Theater.

"Darna" will be previewed at 8 p.m. on July 31. The full production (in August) is a Ballet Philippines production on Mars Ravelo's famous *komiks* character. Choreographed by Denisa Reyes and Alden Lugnasin, directed by Chris Millado, with music by Jesse Lucas, costumes by Liz Batoctoy, sets by Boni Juan, and lighting design by Shoko Matsumoto.

"Kung Hindi Man (Isang Gabi ng Kundiman)" spans 100 years of the Filipino love song. With the Philippine Madrigal Singers and some well-known soloists, in a tribute to Sylvia La Torre. At the Little Theater at 7:30 p.m. on July 15.

Rock concert

"Balangiga Rocks!" is a rock concert featuring Filipino and Filipino-American performers like Color It Red, Radioactive Sago Project, The Jerks, Noel Cabangon, Fatal Posporo, Campo Santo, Bobby Banduria and Mahal.

The Filipino Artists Series showcases the performance of young tenor Ronan Ferrer. His program includes classical arias and art songs, as well as songs from well-known *sarswelas* from the American period like "Walang Sugat" and "Dalagang Bukid." At the CCP Little Theater on July 29.

There will also be a film and video series, plus an exhibit on the Golden Years of Philippine Cinema, with an emphasis on the Hollywoodization of the Filipino.

Pinoy classics

The screenings include Pinoy classics like "Minsa'y Isang Gamu-Gamo," American productions on the Philippines ("Back to Bataan"), movies on the Fil-Am experience ("American Adobo") and films by Filipino-Americans ("Too Much Sleep"). From July 11 to 31 at the CCP's Dream Theater (Tanghalang Manuel Conde).

Other features include a culinary festival, historical tours, outreach activities, art exhibits, exhibitions on periodicals and textbooks published during the American period, and a "showdown" between Filipino-American and Filipino comedians in a hilarious evening of spoofs, stand-up comedy, songs and impersonation (on July 12).

Eating healthy . . .

From page 13

veggies and tofu. Also very good!

Crunchy

The Salt and pepper squid was crunchy and simply prepared. All these we had with the "*walang kamatayan*" *na* salted fish fried rice. Put together, this "orchestra" played beautiful music!

There is nothing like having a wonderful meal without the regret. Many late meals with our Valle badminton group are at the Wilson branch. Also super!

Happy eating!

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SATURDAY*Special*

'Hero,' 'Infernal Affairs' scoop HK film awards

By Carrie Lee

"HERO" won seven awards, but not the one for best film, which went to "Infernal Affairs."

HONG KONG—The Oscar-nominated martial arts epic "Hero" and Asian cop drama "Infernal Affairs" swept up almost every prize at the Hong Kong Film Awards last Sunday, one of the most prestigious events on the Chinese movie circuit.

Past winner

Tony Leung, a past winner of the Cannes Film Festival best actor prize, won the award for best actor for his role in the critically acclaimed film "Infernal Affairs" as a police spy who infiltrates an underworld gang.

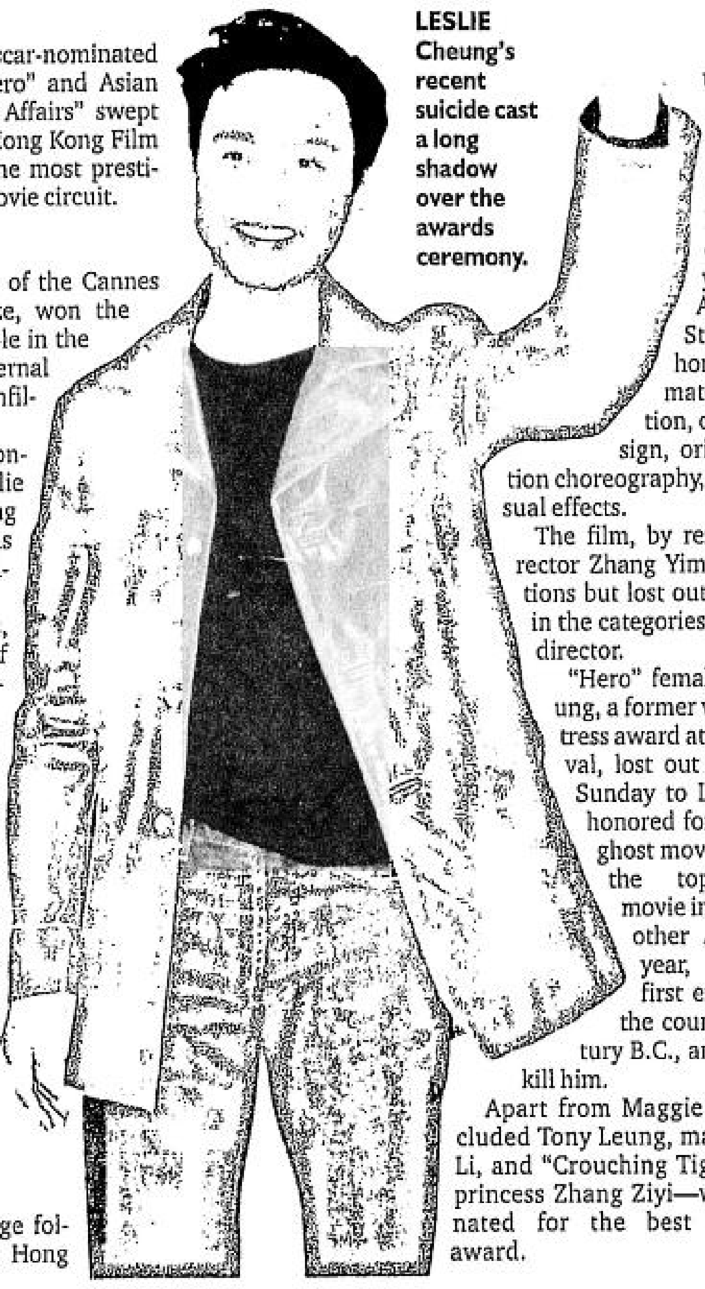
Leung beat another top contender, singer-cum-actor Leslie Cheung, whose suicide in Hong Kong last week saddened fans in Chinese-speaking communities round the world.

Four leading pop singers, dressed in black, sang one of Cheung's hit songs to pay tribute to him before the presentation ceremony began. The sense of gloom was deepened by the spread of the killer virus SARS, and some participants wore face masks.

"Infernal Affairs" grabbed seven of the 19 awards, including the most-coveted prizes of best film, director and actor. It also won for best supporting actor, film editing, screenplay, and original film score. The movie had earned 16 nominations.

Huge following

The blockbuster had a huge following across Asia, and was Hong Kong's top-grossing movie last year, chalking up more than HK$55 million ($7 million) at the box office.



LESLIE Cheung's recent suicide cast a long shadow over the awards ceremony.

"Hero," China's official entry in the Best Foreign Film category of this year's Academy Awards in the United States, also won seven honors—best cinematography, art direction, costume make-up design, original film song, action choreography, sound design and visual effects.

The film, by renowned Chinese director Zhang Yimou, had 14 nominations but lost out to "Infernal Affairs" in the categories of best film and best director.

"Hero" female lead Maggie Cheung, a former winner of the best actress award at the Berlin Film Festival, lost out in that category on Sunday to Lee Sin Je, who was honored for her performance in ghost movie "The Eye." "Hero," the top-grossing Chinese movie in China and in several other Asian countries last year, was about China's first emperor, who unified the country in the third century B.C., and assassins trying to kill him.

Apart from Maggie Cheung its cast included Tony Leung, martial arts master Jet Li, and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" princess Zhang Ziyi—who had been nominated for the best supporting actress award.

Korean blockbuster

The Korean blockbuster "My Sassy Girl" won the best Asian film award.

The death of Leslie Cheung cast a long shadow over the ceremony.

The 46-year-old leapt out of a window of the Mandarin Oriental hotel, leaving a suicide note which newspapers said revealed emotional problems.

Cheung, who had been named best actor in the past, was one of the first Asian stars to play openly gay characters in films.

He was best known internationally for his role in "Farewell My Concubine," where he played a homosexual Chinese opera singer—a role which closely mirrored his life. The 1993 film scooped a series of awards, including the prestigious Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. *Reuters*

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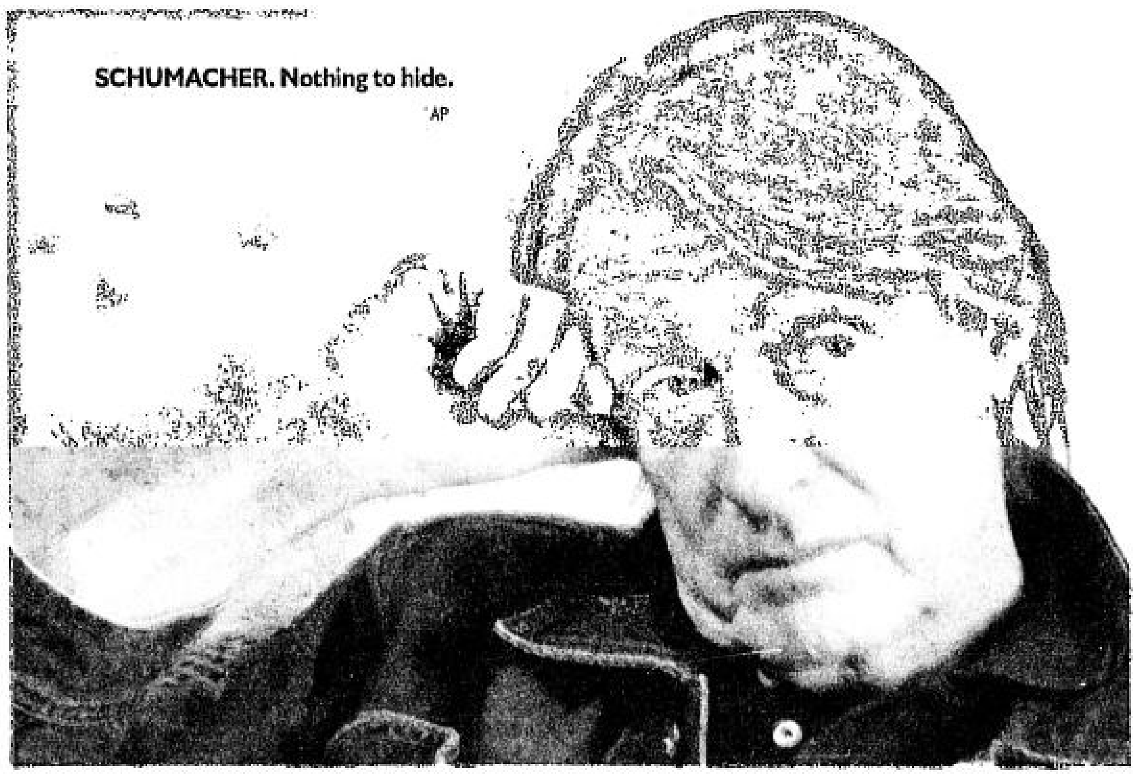
By Christy Lemire



SCHUMACHER. Nothing to hide.

AP

AUSTIN, Texas—It's hard to classify a Joel Schumacher film.

He's directed two critically acclaimed John Grisham adaptations ("A Time to Kill," "The Client") and been accused of destroying the Batman franchise ("Batman Forever," "Batman and Robin").

He's amassed hot young stars in such '80s ensemble films as "The Lost Boys" and "St. Elmo's Fire," the latter of which he cowrote.

Goofy comedies

His earliest films were goofy comedies ("The Incredible Shrinking Woman," "D.C. Cab"), while his most recent have been about tougher topics: a snuff film ("8MM") and a stroke victim ("Flawless").

And one of his best-reviewed films was the little-seen "Tigerland" from 2000, about Army trainees preparing to fight in Vietnam, starring a then-unknown Colin Farrell.

The Irish actor is back with Schumacher for "Phone Booth" as a slick publicist who's the target of an unseen sniper, played by Kiefer Sutherland. Schumacher shot the thriller in 10 days, with the action taking place in and around a phone booth set in midtown Manhattan.

Allure

Working with Schumacher again was much of the allure of the film, Farrell said. He also appears in the director's upcoming "Veronica Guerin," starring Cate Blanchett in the true story of an Irish journalist who was murdered.

"Me and Joel had pretty good lingo together from day one. (We) just seemed to get on pretty well," Farrell said recently in New York. "He just creates an environment where people want to work for him, work with him, an environment where it's safe to fail. And that's an important thing, I think, when you're acting."

"Phone Booth," which made its US premiere during last month's South by Southwest film festival in Austin, originally was scheduled to come out last November, but 20th Century Fox delayed its release because of last year's sniper killings.

It's the second Schumacher film that's been postponed because it was too uncomfortably similar to real life.

"Bad Company," starring Chris Rock and Anthony Hopkins as CIA agents who must stop a nuclear bomb from going off in Manhattan, was delayed after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"When Sept. 11 happened, my first thought was, 'We shouldn't release this at all.' Why release a movie about a bomb in New York City? It just didn't feel right, but those decisions are not up to me," Schumacher said. "When you direct a movie, even though it says 'A Joel Schumacher Film,' it's owned by someone else."

This is the biggest lesson Schumacher has learned after more than two decades as a director, a career he fell into relatively late in life. Now 63, he directed his first feature, "The Incredible Shrinking Woman," when he was 40.

Window dresser

Before that, he attended the Parsons School of Design in New York and was a department store window dresser. He also designed costumes for films in the 1970s, including Woody Allen's "Sleeper" and "Interiors."

But making movies fascinated him since his childhood in a poor section of New York. His father died when he was 4; his mother worked six days a week. The movie theater he could see from the back window of his apartment provided an escape from reality.

"One day your father's there, the next day he's not. I'm sure I was lonely and frightened, and these movies, they just solved everything and I could get swept away with those incredible stories and that world of sight and sound," he said. "And I think that I got something so wonderful from that, that I wanted to be part of it—not in it, but part of passing it on."

He also escaped from reality through substance abuse, which he speaks about candidly. He started drinking when he was 9, first tried drugs in his teens, and partied with Andy Warhol at Studio 54 in his 30s. He didn't get sober until he was 52.

"I was a drunk for a long time and I was a drug addict and a sex addict and a crazy guy. There's nothing to hide," Schumacher said.

Recovering addict

"Any recovering addict is always hoping that someone will hear your story and realize that you can get sober and you can have a great life."

Creating smaller movies—and not the summer smashes that brought him equal amounts of cash and criticism—is part of that life.

One of the most vocal critics of Schumacher's second "Batman," 1997's "Batman and Robin" starring George Clooney and Chris O'Donnell, was Harry Knowles, creator of the Austin-based "Ain't It Cool News" movie website.

He said the film ultimately served as a "how-not-to" adapt a comic book to the screen, because it was more concerned with catering to kids than telling a compelling story.

"This is a guy who can make complex dramas. He has that in him, so why does he treat this differently? If it's the studio, then walk off the project," Knowles said. "At that level, he ought to have autonomy."

Schumacher has done just that with the films he's made since then, including "8MM" and "Flawless."

Better person

"I think it's made me a better person and I hope it's made me a better director," he said. "I know I disappointed some people with 'Batman and Robin,' but the Grishams were huge successes. I love those movies. So it's not as if I'm ashamed of that work and I'm trying to cleanse myself. It's just that I didn't want to be the summer blockbuster king anymore. I wanted to tell other stories."

The next story he'll tell is "Phantom of the Opera," which he said Andrew Lloyd Webber first asked him to do after seeing 1987's "The Lost Boys." Schumacher said he's undaunted by the success of other recent musicals, including 2002's best-picture Oscar winner, "Chicago," and 2001's "Moulin Rouge!"

"Every movie stands on its own. If you make an action movie, you can't say. 'Well, gee, look at the action movies that have made millions of dollars,'" he said. "All you can do is make the best movie you know how to make and then whatever's gonna happen is gonna happen." *AP*

Losing paradise

From page J4

Joyce on 'Inday, Heart to Heart'

TOMORROW, catch the voluptuous Joyce Jimenez as she "bares" herself on "Inday, Heart to Heart," 10:30-11:30 a.m., GMA 7. We asked her some very interesting questions—like, did she have to lie down on the so-called casting couch to make it in show business, as some sexy stars have done? Her answers are interesting—definitely.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors of the show: San Miguel Corp. (Coca Cola, Royal Tru Orange, Sprite, Lift and Viva Mineral Water), Samsung, Tender Bob's Steaks, Potion Planet, Home & Lifestyle, American Blues, Yamaha, Celine and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

(For your comments and insights, please email: badids2000@yahoo.com.)

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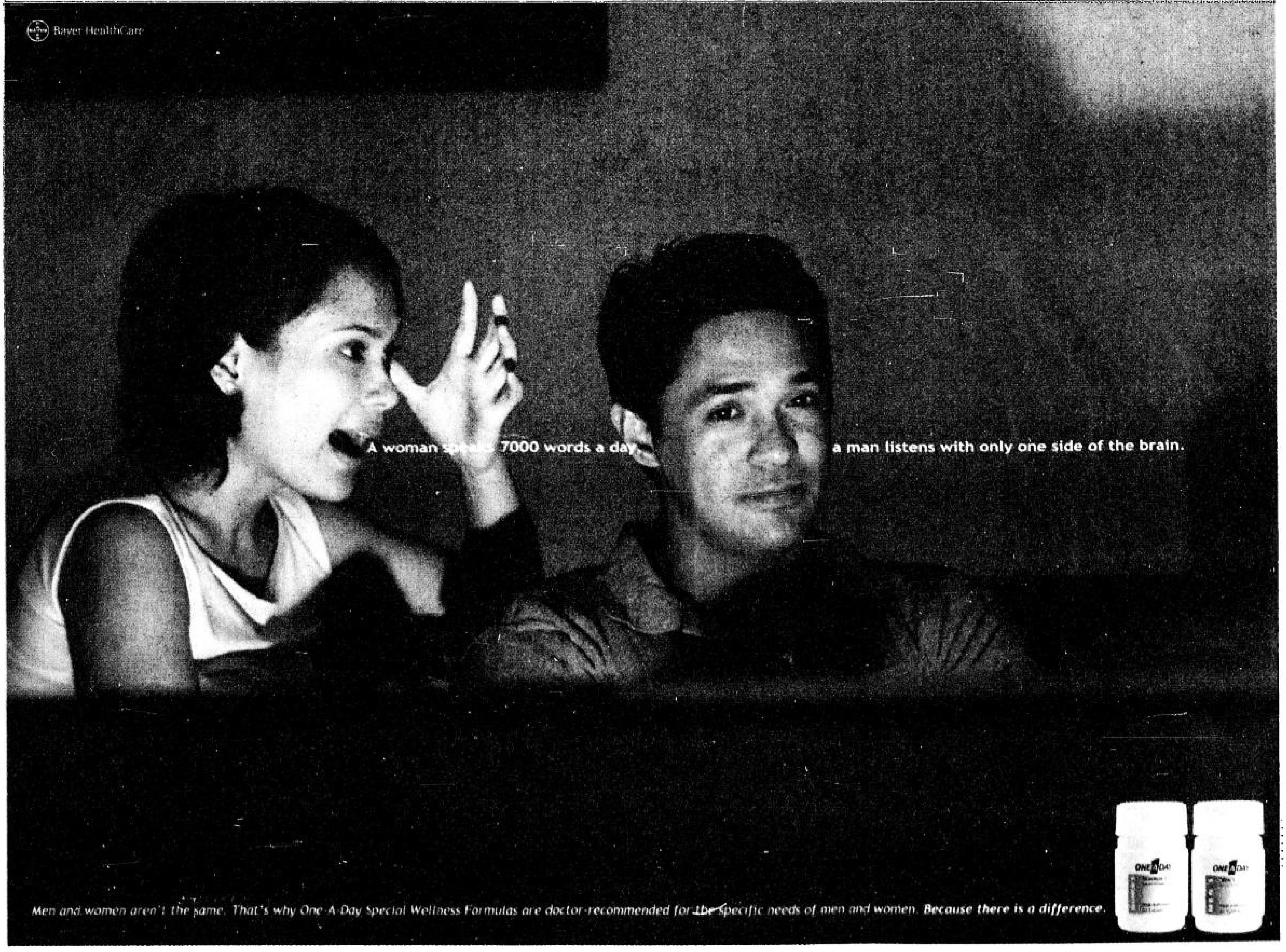

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ONE A DAY
ONE A DAY

They played Jesus Christ in the movies

By Behn Cervantes

"IMAGINE, he played Christ, our Savior!" declared Barbara Perez when she recalled her having acted with Jeffrey Hunter. In 1962, the Hollywood hunk came to the Philippines to film "No Man Is An Island," a war film. For his native co-star, the Hollywood producers chose wide-eyed Barbara Perez of Sampaguita Pictures. Barbara was the Philippines' own Audrey Hepburn.

Gentleman

Barbara was in total awe of Jeffrey because "he was such a gentleman. He was so kind to me, as he was to everyone else on the set."

What better traits for an actor who played Christ in "King of Kings," the 1961 remake of the black and white, silent film classic directed by Cecil B. DeMille? The Nicholas Ray version had technology in its favor, so scenes were bigger, the music was stereophonic and its scenes were in Technicolor, although some critics insisted that de Mille's "superb storytelling and reverence for the subject matter" made the first version stand the test of time.

Surprise choice

Hunter was a surprise choice, since past productions opted for an actor who would be a pale, blond and stoically thin Christ. Jeffrey was dark-haired, athletic and therefore more credible as a carpenter and fisherman. His blue eyes were certainly magnetic and he played Christ with an everyday charm that made people want to follow him.

Never mind that Hunter was earlier known as a Hollywood pretty boy who had appeared in such films as "Belles On Their Toes," "Dreamboat" and "Princess of the Nile." Those fluffy flicks merely exploited his good looks and physique.

He had formal theater training, however, so he did appear in more respectable films like "The Searchers," "In Love and War" and the blockbuster "The Longest Day." Formerly married to actress Barbara Rush, Hunter was never able to top his portrayal of Christ. In fact, he died a man plagued by an unhappy second marriage, bad business decisions and alcohol abuse.

The original movie Christ was H.B. Warner, an actor who was later seen in smaller roles in such classics as "Lost Horizon," "It's A Wonderful Life" and "Mr. Deeds Goes To Town." The public associated Warner with the cinematic Christ until Hunter came along. However, little else is remembered of him.

So, was it bad luck to play Christ?

Cameo appearances

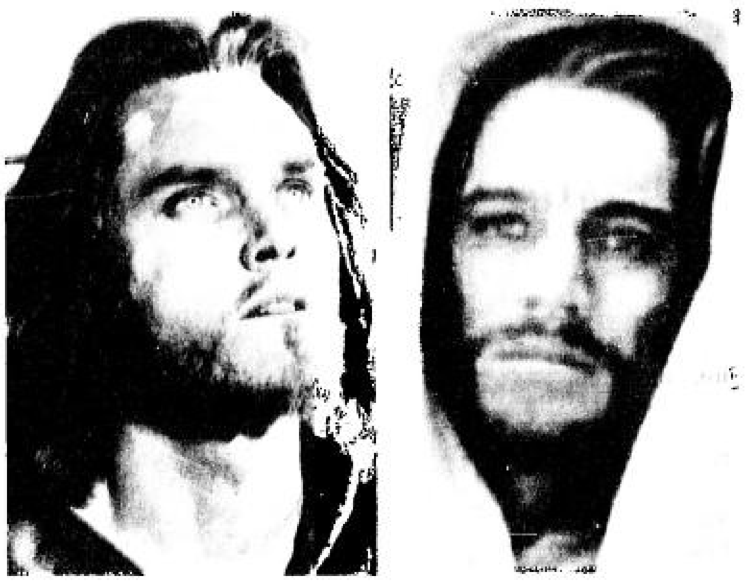
George Stevens cast respected Swedish actor Max Von Sydow as Christ in "The Greatest Story Ever Told," an overly long Biblical extravaganza marred by too many cameo appearances, including John Wayne as the Roman centurion charged with overseeing the crucifixion of Christ.

Max, as Christ, raised a few casting eyebrows because Von Sydow was associated with the morose cinematic classics of Scandinavian genius Ingmar Bergman. He was brilliant in many a Bergman classic like "Wild Strawberries," "The Seventh Seal" and "The Virgin Spring," which focused on the personal odyssey of modern man.

His Christ was mature, stoic and formidable, since Von Sydow has quite a screen presence and an imposing voice. He was never typecast as Christ, but went on to portray varied characters in other films.

Von Sydow played the "be-deviled" priest in "The Exorcist." He has also been a ruthless international executive, an intellectual terrorist, a sadistic Russian spy, plus all kinds of villains plaguing heroes of the silver screen on both sides of the Atlantic.

He continues to be a busy actor, clearly proving that there *is* life after cinematic crucifixion, after all!



HUNTER (left) and Von Sydow as Christ in their respective films.

Miramax mulls new 'Guys and Dolls' movie

LOS ANGELES—How does a film studio top the Oscar-nominated "Chicago?" Try putting together a movie musical based on another popular stage show, "Guys and Dolls." Miramax Films is in talks to do just that, taking the same producing team on "Chicago" and mounting a new movie version of the hit 1950s Broadway musical and film based on Damon Runyon's tale of gambling and love in the Big Apple, a knowledgeable industry source said on Thursday.

Rights

Miramax is seeking to buy rights for a "Guys and Dolls" movie to be produced by Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, who put together "Chicago," the source said, adding that while Miramax is near an agreement, a firm deal has yet to be secured.

Zadan and Meron held some rights to the musical, and Miramax is now looking to secure rights to the original Runyon short story on which the musical is based.

A Miramax spokesman declined to comment.

"Chicago," which stars Richard Gere, Renee Zellweger and Catherine Zeta-Jones, has wowed movie fans this year, won awards, and exceeded $100 million in domestic grosses.

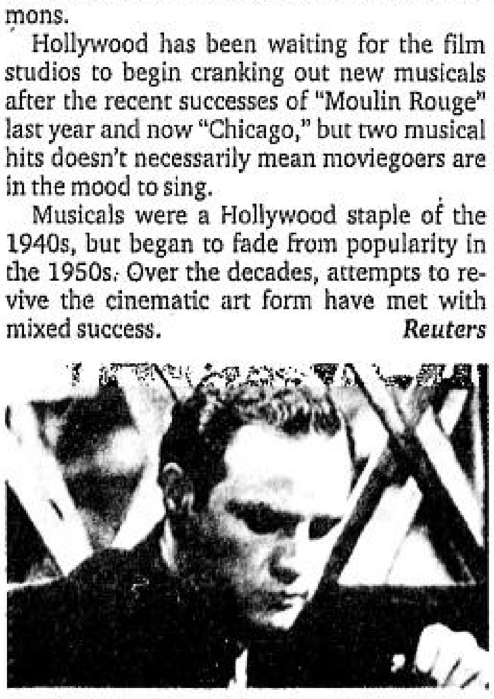
Dark tale

"Chicago" debuted on Broadway in the 1970s and had a wildly successful revival in the 1990s. It tells a dark tale about a struggling actress (Zellweger) who rockets to fame after killing her lover, and is loaded with singing, dancing and familiar tunes like "All That Jazz" and "Razzle Dazzle."

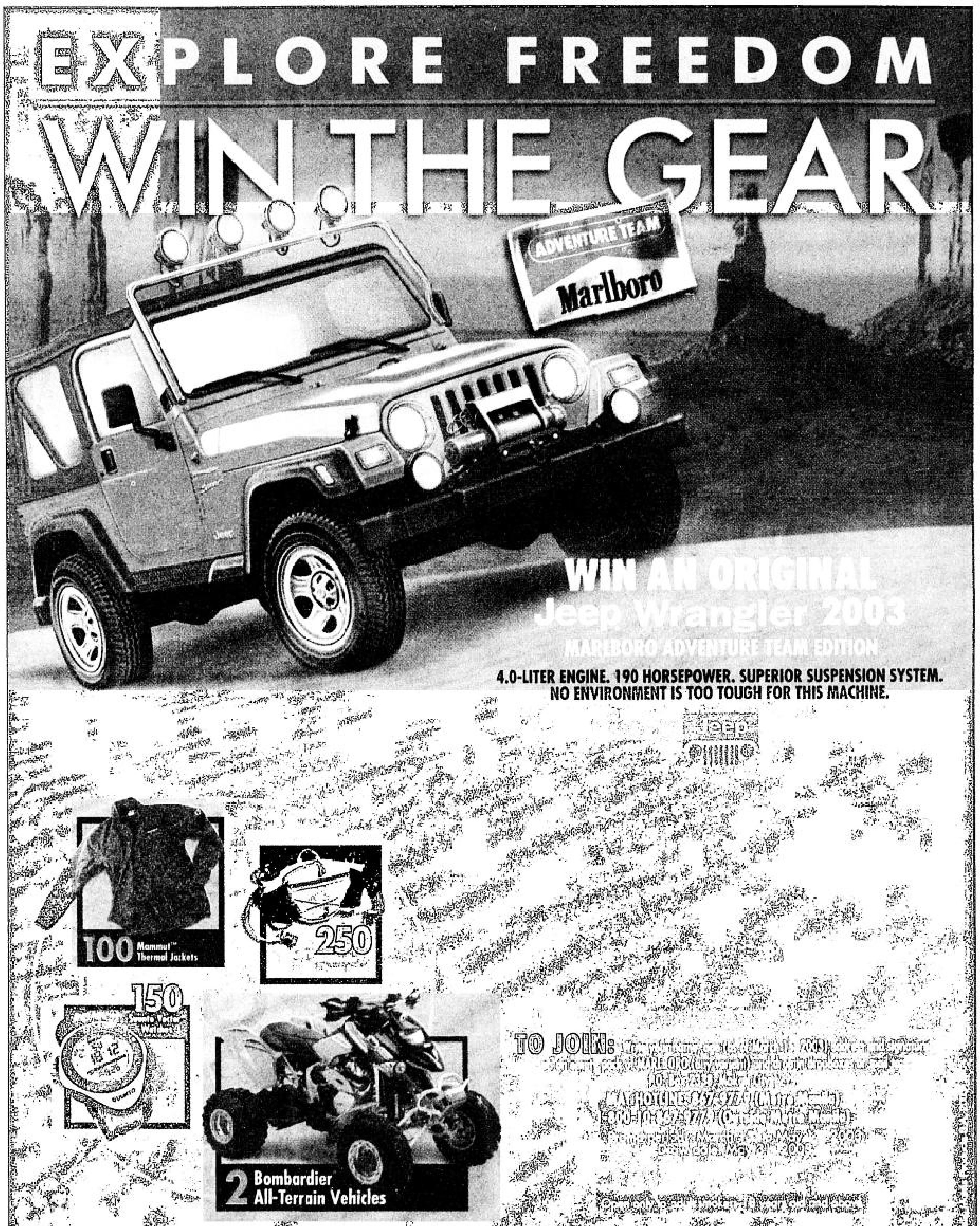
"Guys and Dolls," too, is famed for its memorable musical numbers like "Luck Be a Lady," and "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat." With music by Frank Loesser, "Guys and Dolls" was a highly successful Broadway show of the 1950s and made into a movie in 1955 with Marlon Brando, Frank Sinatra and Jean Simmons.

Hollywood has been waiting for the film studios to begin cranking out new musicals after the recent successes of "Moulin Rouge" last year and now "Chicago," but two musical hits doesn't necessarily mean moviegoers are in the mood to sing.

Musicals were a Hollywood staple of the 1940s, but began to fade from popularity in the 1950s. Over the decades, attempts to revive the cinematic art form have met with mixed success. *Reuters*



BRANDO. Surprised viewers by singing and dancing in the 1955 film based on Damon Runyon's tale of gambling and loving in New York City.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Losing paradise

INDAY with Gene Palomo and Clara beside Villa Escudero's Labasin Falls.

ESCUDERO (center) with Gene and Inday.

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

That was one heaven of a weekend, wasn't it? It was one of the most meaningful holidays I've ever had—even if it was also one of the briefest.

Special experience

I have Mang Ado to thank for that revitalizing overnight vacation to Villa Escudero. It was the most appropriate place for our family to unwind and to bond in a truly special experience of sharing beautiful moments with each other.

We don't do that very often these days anymore, and that opportunity to just go away from the madding crowd was a most exhilarating treat, indeed.

The place is magical. All the while, I believed God created paradise somewhere in Iraq. Now, I'm convinced He did it in that piece of heaven nestled between Tiaong in Quezon and San Pablo in Laguna.

Yes, Clara, God has truly blessed Villa Escudero. While the heart of the place throbs in the plantation village, it has a healthy rainforest with lush vegetation and the breathtaking Labasin Falls that flows into the river that runs through and feeds the entire place with life and energy.

Extravagant

Indeed, my dear child, in Villa Escudero, God has decided to be generous—even extravagant! This is evident not only in the bounty of nature everywhere you look, but also in the lavish smiles of the people there. Going to Villa Escudero is like being embraced by heaven.

And the place gave me a most unexpected but nonetheless precious gift—a much deeper appreciation of my being a Filipino. Actually, that's a laugh. Because, I confess, Filipiniana bores me. Anything that remotely suggests Philippine history and culture and mores triggers a phobic reaction in me that automatically makes me recoil and withdraw in haste.

But Villa Escudero changed all that. The guided tour around the place given by Mang Ado himself was a gem of an experience. Do you know, Clara, that the Villa Escudero Plantation and Resort is a self-contained, working plantation founded way back in 1872?

In 1890, it was acquired by Don Placido Escudero and his wife Doña Claudia Marasigan. Originally planted to sugarcane, it shifted to coconut in the early 1900s, when the couple's only son Don Arsenio Escudero managed it.

In the late 1800s, there were only six families living on the plantation. This has since grown to the present 130 families. Each family is allocated ample space for its own home and garden.

Natural beauty

It was in 1980 that the plantation was opened to the public. It has since developed an international reputation as a special, magical place where visitors can experience many aspects of Philippine life all in one day—its history, cuisine and music, as well as its natural beauty and the charm of its people. My dearest Clara, Villa Escudero is truly the Philippines personified!

For starters, there's the Chapel of the Ascension at the center of the village, where all the important events in the simple, serene life of the villagers revolve. There, too, is the Family Museum, which houses one of the country's most important collections, which is unmatched in diversity.

The museum's architectural design is based on a 16th-century Spanish-era church destroyed during the Battle of Manila in 1945. Inside is a treasure trove of religious artifacts—silver altars, gilded carrozas, icons of saints made of ivory, and other important pieces from the Spanish era—truly a rich testimony to the artistry and piety of the Filipino.

Galleon trade

There's also a delightful assortment of valuable objects from the galleon trade, such as oriental ceramics, costumes, rare coins, old furniture, dioramas of Philippine wildlife and ethnography, and many other items of interest from all over the world.

Still on Filipiniana Appreciation 101, the Escudero family mentors not only one of the country's most renowned cultural dance troupes but also one of our most talented native string and Maranao percussion groups. I truly enjoyed the colorful dances representing the different regions of the country, complete with dazzling costumes sewn by plantation seamstresses.

Memorable too was the food featuring special Escudero family recipes handed down through generations. What made the luncheon experience all the more enchanting was the fact that we had it by the waterfalls. The tables were placed right in the shallow stream and, as we ate, our feet were tickled by the cool, gurgling spring waters.

Dinner when evening crept in was something else. It was served at the Coconut Pavilion on the shoreline of Labasin river. Lilting melodies from serenaders made me recall happy memories of a beautiful past long gone; but forever alive in the heart.

Footnote

My dearest child, I am making it a point to tell you all this because, if the MMDA will have its way, the beauty of Villa Escudero shall soon be just a footnote in our memory banks.

As you know, Bayani Fernando is our garbage czar, and he has this idea to transform this paradise into the country's biggest trash can, dumping into it daily an estimated 80 tons of filth from Metro Manila and environs.

Clara, I don't know Fernando personally but I think he's a good man who only wants to do well in his job. But, why lay waste a place of immense beauty? Why ruin something that could have only been the work of the hand of God? Why destroy paradise?

As I write this, Bush and his coalition forces are destroying what remains of the place believed to have been paradise. That's horrible. But a similar horror is going to unfold if Fernando succeeds in his plan to destroy Villa Escudero.

Nature's bounty

Dear Clara, Mang Ado and the combined citizenry of Quezon and Laguna have banded themselves together to fight that monstrosity—but Fernando does not have an ear to listen to their plea. He is not one to quibble over such matters as preserving nature's bounty, much less over such a "trifle" as protecting Philippine history and culture.

Clara, I'm praying to God that He stays Fernando's hand. He listens neither to ordinary folks nor to provincial resolutions that most emphatically tells him to stop and desist from pursuing any plans that will befoul Mother Nature and Philippine honor.

Clara, I'd like you to join me on April 22 for a special Konsyerto para sa Kalikasan to be held at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City. This is another creative way that Mang Ado and his fellow concerned citizens have come up with to combat Fernando's plan.

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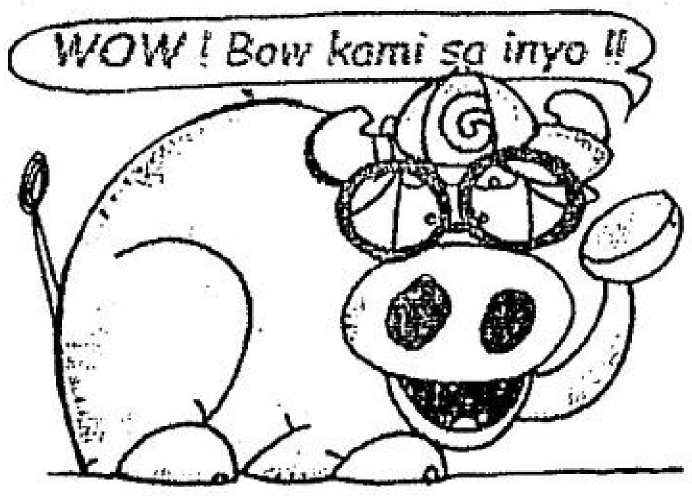
WOW ! Bow kami sa inyo !!

Junior Inquirer

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

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WITH HONORS

AT THE TOP of their batch—and the school! Lorenzo, Thompson, Luis and Laurence hanging out.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

By Eline Santos

SUMMER is a time to relax. Four Xavier grade school graduates certainly deserve to have fun this summer. Last month they were given the Xavier Award, an honor given to students for doing their best in their studies, their extra-curricular activities and for serving their communities.

These cool awardees are incoming high school students Luis Locsin, Lorenzo Mangubat, Thompson Tang and Laurence Go.

"You have to embody the six C's—character, compassion, competence, culture, community and conscience," says Luis about the award.

A two-time Xavier awardee, Luis was also student council president and a varsity swimming team and tennis team athlete. He finished the school year with an average above 96% to get first honors.

Lorenzo is not only a talented violinist, he was a Taekwondo varsity member, a boy scout, and president of his class. His teacher says Lorenzo used to be timid but really bloomed this year. He graduated with second honors.

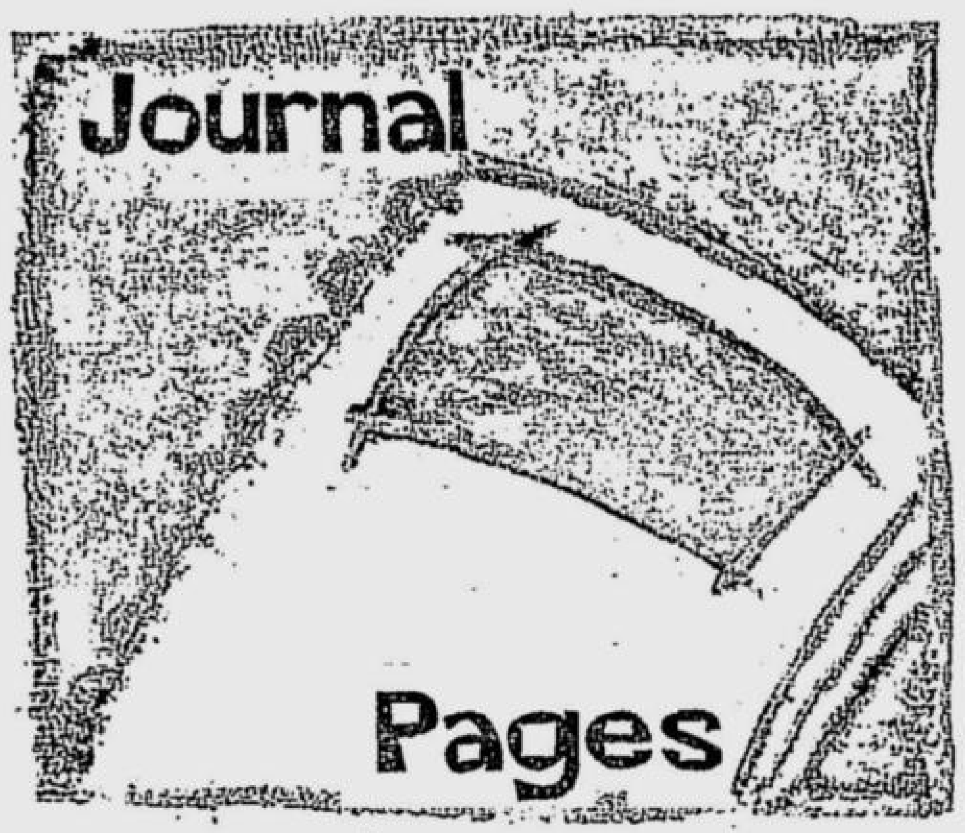
Thompson and Laurence are the academic stars. They both received seven medals of academic excellence, diligence awards, and first honors. Aside from serving as SC secretary and treasurer respectively, they were presidents of their respective classes and members of the Math Trainers Guild.

Being a model student wasn't always easy though.

"There were a lot of things that I planned this year that didn't happen or happened in a way I didn't like," Luis says. "I had to accept it and not react badly to the situation."

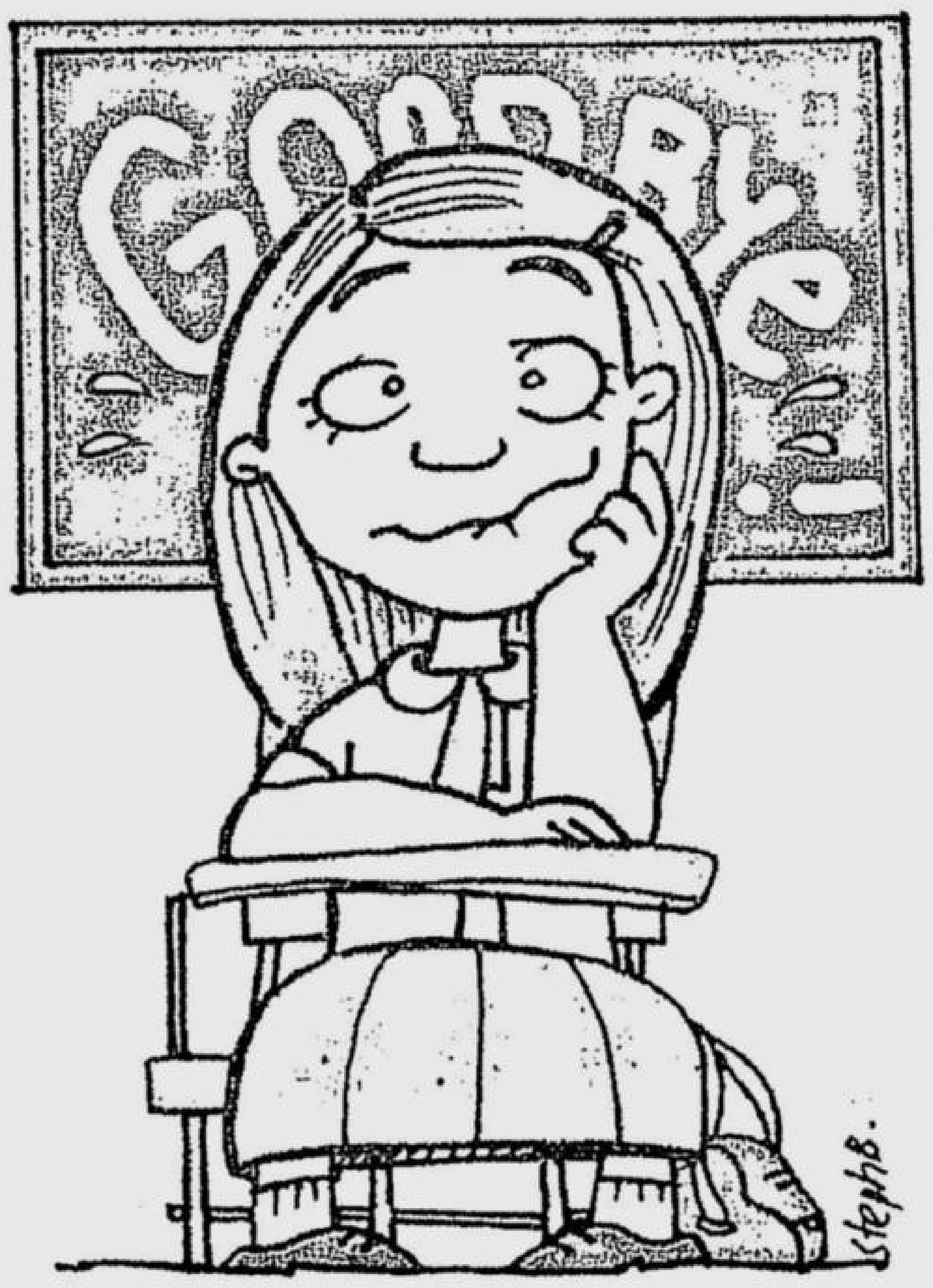
Laurence says sometimes he was so tired, he didn't want to study anymore. "But you have to remember you have God-given talent so don't waste it," he says. Thompson says that if students learn to manage their time, they'll be able to accomplish lots.

"God has great plans for everyone," Lorenzo says with a smile.



Leaving it all behind

By Julien Dio
Miriam College Grade School
Quezon City



IT WAS the last day of exams, and the last day of school. I walked slowly out of the classroom. I didn't want it to be summer.

I remembered my favorite teachers, there were three of them. One was moderately tall and wore glasses. She was our Homeroom adviser and Math teacher. One was very thin and serious. She taught Reading subject. The last one was chubby and funny and kept telling me to "keep writing." He taught Language.

A tear ran down my face. For me, it was hard to say goodbye. I had too many memories to fit in my head, and I was afraid I'd forget them.

I felt as if I were crossing a bridge from the 5th grade to the 6th grade. But I still had the memories in my heart, even if I didn't have any pictures, I wouldn't be able to forget everything so easily.

I could remember everything right from the start and feel good whenever I did. Because I had a great soul inside me that would never, ever forget those treasured moments. All I had to do was to keep those memories in my heart and I'll never need a camera to rely on.

Sound Familiar?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers

You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!

HP Fan

HELLO! I am a JUNIOR INQUIRER fan and I look forward to reading your newspaper every Saturday. I especially like Straight From JI Readers. This is a reaction to Mariane R. Maggay's letter which appeared in this section on the April 5, 2003 issue. Like her, I'm also a Harry Potter fan. I can't live a day without reading one of the series! I have all the books and I've read them lots of times! I just can't get enough of HP! One time, I was reading a book for my book report and we weren't supposed to bring that book home. Then I picked up my Harry Potter book and read. When I got back to school to finish my report, I forgot all about the book I was supposed to read 'coz I was busy reading HP!!!—PATRICIA MAE C. BALINGIT, patriciab@ramseslloyd.zzn.com

Stop Pollution!

HERE are some tips to stop pollution: 1) plant more trees for fresher air; 2) don't buy things you won't even use after all; 3) avoid burning trash; 4) recycle non-biodegradable trash; 5) learn to compost biodegradable trash; 6) and ask your parents to check your family car periodically for smoke emissions. When more people follow these tips, we will become an example to other countries. We will make a difference. We will help make Mother Earth—the only habitable planet known to man—a better place to live in.—MARK JEROME MALABANAN CASTILLO, 11, Kingsville Subdivision, Antipolo City

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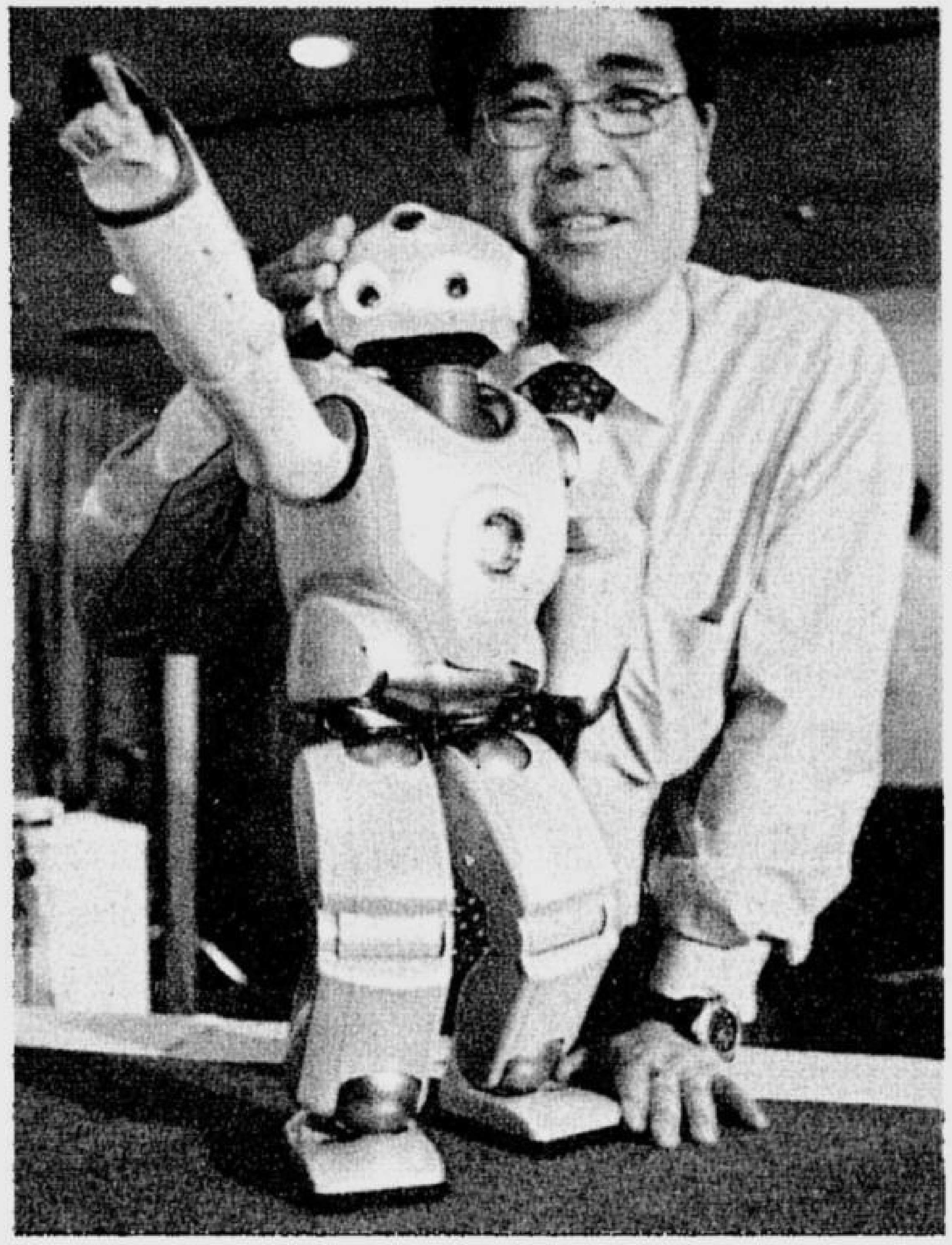
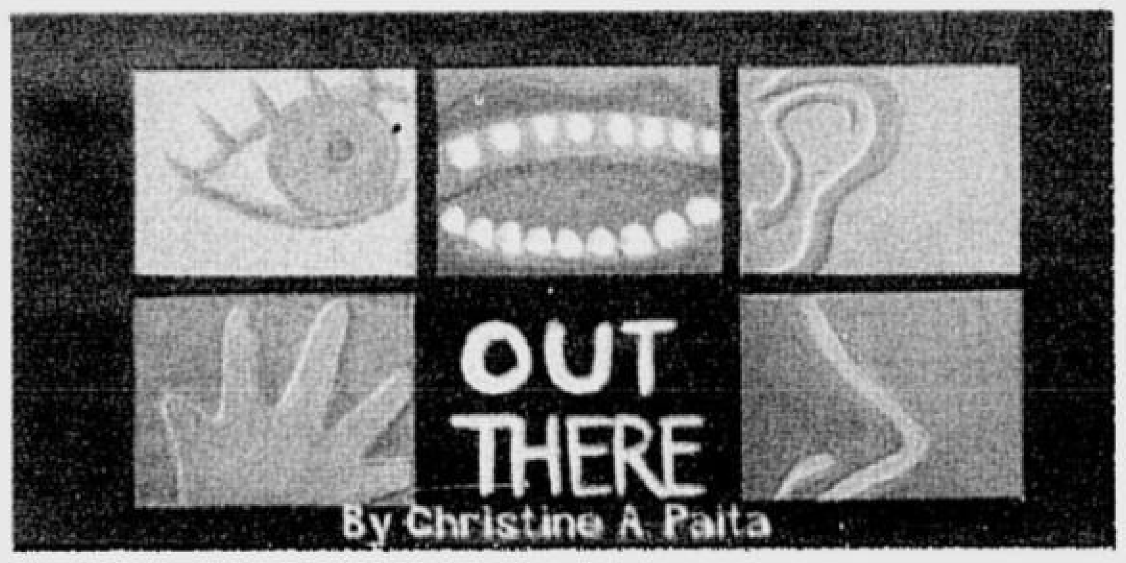


Techno Fun

SENIOR Manager of Japan's Sony Corporation Masahiro Fujita pats its prototype of humanoid robot "SDR-4X II" during a press conference in Tokyo. The 60-centimeter-high entertainment robot can communicate with people and walk along trying to avoid obstacles using special sensors. The new robot was on exhibit during Robodex 2003 in Yokohama, suburban Tokyo. *AFP*



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Workshops

SPORTS AND MUSIC. The Philippine Women's University offers the following workshops for kids: swimming, martial arts, visual arts, **MTV dance**, ballet, piano, voice and guitar. For inquiries, call 524-2609 or 526-8421 local 142.

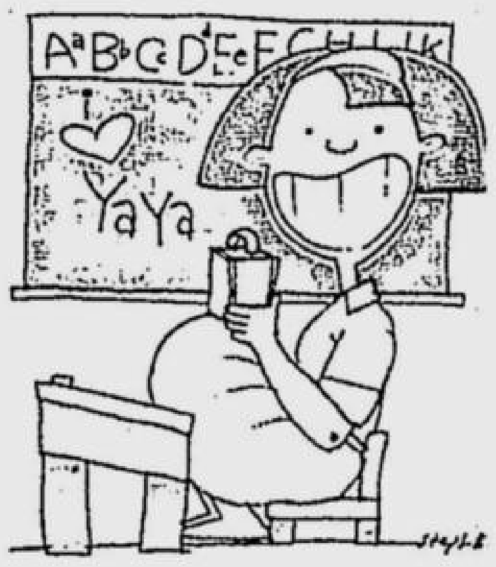
FABER-CASTELL'S ART WORKSHOP. Faber-Castell Little Masters Club members and other kids ages 6-12 may join workshops on **Filipino animation**, Japanese animation and American cartoons on April 24-26 at SM North Edsa Activity Center, Quezon City, and on May 1-3 at SM Manila Activity Center. For more info, call 361-7391 to 92.

ARTS AND CRAFTS. Ms Pia Rivera, a graduate of Instituto d'Arte Lorenzo de Medici in Italy, conducts these workshops: Crafts for kids ages 5 to 12, from April 22 to 26; and Painting and **Drawing for Beginners**, open to all ages, from April 28 to May 6, May 7-15 and May 16-24. Contact Ms Rivera at 646-1078 or 0917-5331336. The studio is located at Unit M12 Prince Tower Condominium, 14 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

ART AND DRAMA. Children's drama specialist Gamay Arkoncel-Dacanay offers Creative Summer (for kids ages 4-6) and Children's **Art and Drama** (kids ages 7-12) workshops from April 21 to May 15. The workshops will be held in 38-B Marikit St., West Triangle, Quezon City. For inquiries, call Teacher Gamay at 0917-7874615 or 524-7870.

JKW CLUB ACTIVITIES. The Jollibee Kids Workshop Club is back with its arts and crafts activities this April. Learn a new hobby every Saturday, from making a puzzle wall decor to **painting ceramics**! For more info on the workshop schedule and Jollibee venue, call 363-4690 or 363-7659 and look for Ghem or Joyce, or e-mail eserrano@info.com.ph.

MORE WORKSHOPS! CARE Center for Early Learning opens its workshops in art, reading, creative writing, dance and singing to kids ages 4 to 12. The center also offers lessons in computer, cooking, voice and piano. There's also the **Smart Yaya's School**, a seminar-workshop for kids' caregivers on proper child care. Classes begin on April 21. For inquiries, call 928-4847, 416-5476, 920-2943. Visit the school at No. 28 Ricardo St., Carmel I Subd., Quezon City.



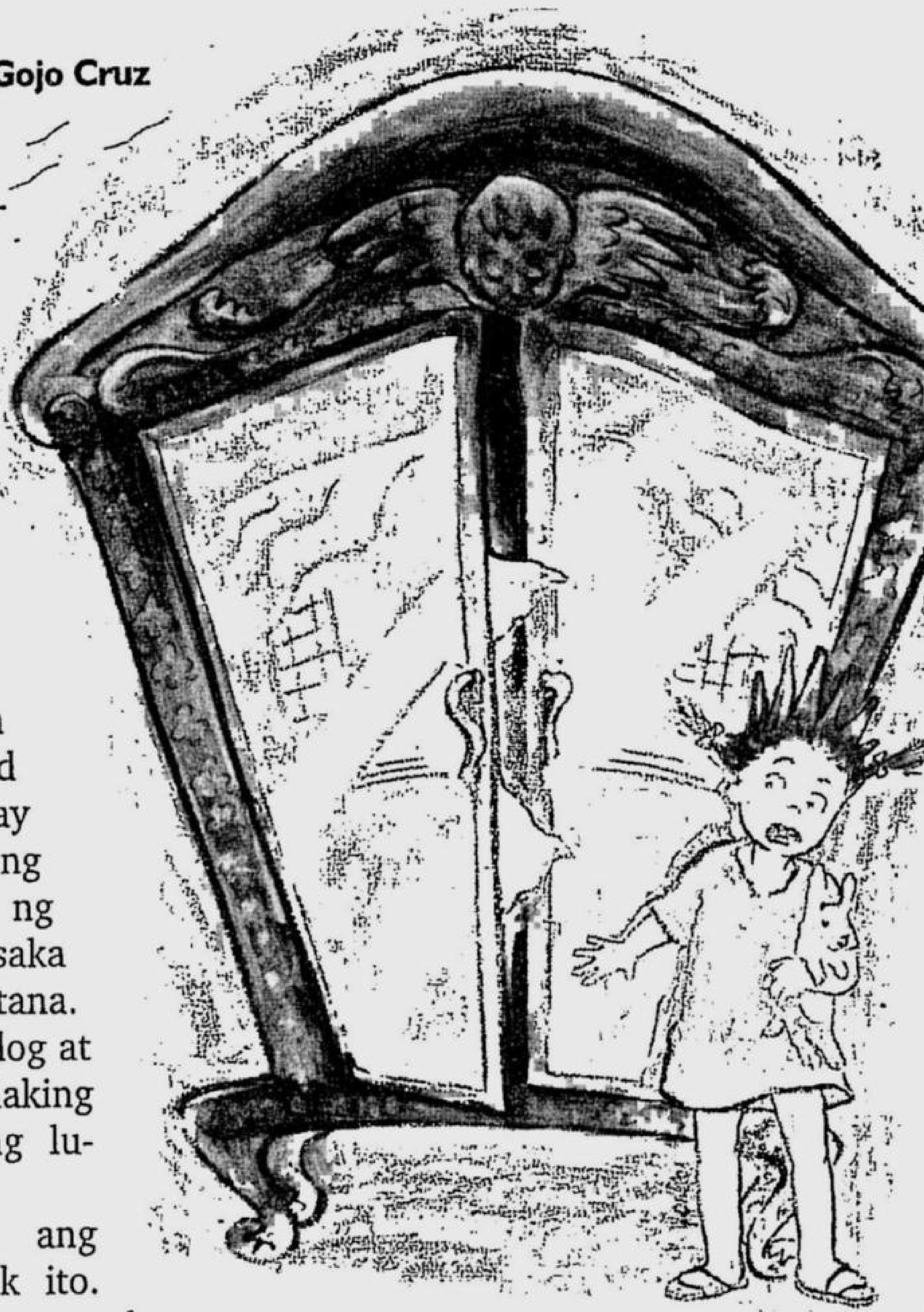
Camps

SUMMER CAMP FOR SPECIAL KIDS. Camp Discovery, Inc. will hold a Social Skills Training Camp for special kids from April 23-27 in Tagaytay City. This **five-day camp** is open to kids ages 7-14. Registration is ongoing. For details, call 871-0827 and look for Joji Reynes, or e-mail campdisco@yahoo.com. Camp Discovery is located at 7-C Soriano St., BF Resort Village, Las Piñas City.

COMMUNE WITH NATURE. Homework Center, Inc. invites kids ages 7 and up to spend their summer outdoors in **Calaruega, Batangas** from May 4-7. Kids will learn survival skills and arts and crafts, as well as do some tree planting and stargazing. For more info, call 721-5534.

Ang Lumang Aparador

Kuwento ni Genaro R. Gojo Cruz
Guhit ni Yasmin Ong



WALANG sinuman ang nakabubuhat ng lumang aparador kundi sina Nanay at Tatay lang. Ano kaya ang nasa loob nito? Siguro isang dambuhalang damit. At kapag umuulan o dumadagundong ang langit sa kulog at kidlat, kaagad na tatakpan ni Nanay ng puting kumot ang malaking salamin ng lumang aparador saka isasara ang mga bintana. Sa isip ko, pati ba kulog at kidlat ay takot sa malaking salamin sa harap ng lumang aparador?

Lumang-luma na ang aparador. Kulay-putik ito. May maliliit na ukit ng mga bulaklak sa bawat gilid at isang mukha ng anghel sa itaas ng salamin. Kung titingnan nga sa malayo ang aparador, tila isa itong malaking kuweba. Naisip ko nga minsan, baka may natutulog na higante sa loob nito, kaya hindi nabubuhat ninuman maliban kina Nanay at Tatay.

Iniiwasan kong mapadaan dito. Natatakot kasi akong baka magising ang higante sa loob ng kulay-putik na aparador.

ISANG araw, binuksan ni Nanay ang lumang aparador upang kunin ang isang mahalagang dokumento. Lumangitngit ang pinto nito. Nagsimula na ring kumalat ang isang pambihirang amoy. Parang isang luma at inaamag na libro. Natakot ako. Baka lamunin si Nanay ng dambuhalang damit o kainin ng higanteng natutulog sa luma at kulay-putik na aparador. Ngunit walang dambuhalang damit at higanteng kumuha kay Nanay nang buksan niya ang aparador. Sinilip ko ang loob ngunit agad-agad itong isinara ni Nanay.

Minsan naglakas-loob akong manalamin sa lumang aparador. Malaki kasi ang salamin, kitang-kita ang buong katawan ko. Ngunit umihip ang kakaibang hangin sa aking likuran, nagtaasan ang puting kurtina sa bintana at nag-amoy sampagita ang paligid.

Pakiramdam ko, may isang babaing nakaputi sa aking likod. Kumaripas ako ng takbo. Mula noon, hindi na ako nagsalamin sa luma at kulay-putik na aparador.

"Sa Linggo, magsisimba tayo sa bayan ng tatay mo. Ika-pitong kaarawan mo kaya kailangang maganda ang iyong isusuot."

Kumunut-kunot ang noo ni Nanay na parang may iniisip. Hindi ko alam kung ano.

"Halika."

May kinuhang isang bungkos ng mga susi si Nanay. At sa bungkos ng mga susi ay may namumukod-tanging malaki at kalawanging susi. Ito pala ang susi ng lumang aparador. Bumilis ang tibok ng aking puso. Natatakot ako. Baka lamunin kami ni Nanay ng dambuhalang damit o ng natutulog na higante sa loob ng lumang aparador.

Muling lumangitngit ang pinto ng lumang aparador na tila nabibiyak na lupa at nagsimulang kumalat ang amoy luma at may amag na libro. Hindi ko alam kung tatakpan ko ang aking tenga o ang aking ilong. Ngunit hindi man lang natatakot si Nanay.

NAMANGHA ako nang ilabas ni Nanay ang isang napakagandang bestida. Noon lamang ako nakakita ng ganoong kagandang bestida. Kulay rosas ito, pinaulanan ng pulang-pula at maliliit na burdang rosas. At mayroon pa itong isang malaking lasong puti sa likod. Lapat na lapat sa akin ang kay gandang bestida. Parang isinukat ng isang modista.

At sa pagdiriwang ng Linggo ng Wika sa aming eskuwelahan, kailangan kong magsuot ng kasuotang Pilipino, kaagad inilabas ni Nanay sa lumang aparador ang kasuotang Maria Clara na punung-puno ng masasalimuot na burda.

At noong ako'y magkumunyon, inilabas naman ni Nanay ang puting-puting bestida na may terno pang belo na yari sa telang pinya.

At noong ako'y sabitan ng medalya, namangha ang aking mga guro at mga kaklase sa aking isinuot na bestida. May tela itong parang sinasaniban ng liwanag sa gabi.

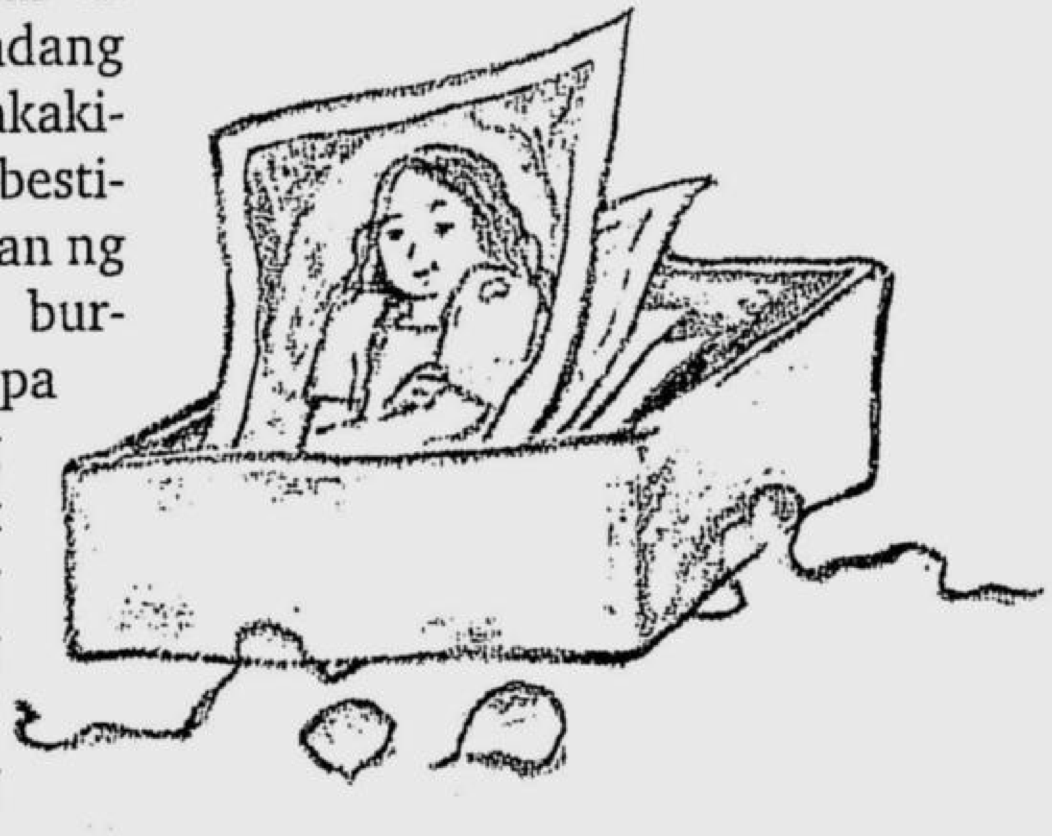
Lalong nagging mahiwaga ang lumang aparador. Siguro may isang malaking makina sa loob nito na tumatahi ng magagandang damit na isinusuot ko.

Minsan kinuha ko ang isang bungkos ng susi ni Nanay at sinubukang buksan ang aparador ngunit hindi ko mabuksan.

Mahigpit ang pagkakapinid ng pinto at anuman ang gawin kong pihit at pagpapaikut-ikot sa kalawanging susi ay di ko mabuksan ang lumang aparador.

Isang gabi habang nagsusuklay sa harap ng mahiwagang salamin si Nanay ay itinanong ko ang tungkol sa kulay putik na aparador.

"Ang lumang aparador na ito ang minana ko sa iyong Lola Dominga. Kilalang magaling na



mananahi at magbuburda ang iyong Lola noong panahon ng Amerikano. Kapag may sobrang tela, itinatahi ako ng bestida ng iyong Lola," ang sabi ni Nanay.

Kinuha ni Nanay ang isang bungkos ng susi at binuksan ang luma at kulay-putik na aparador. Kinakabahan pa rin ako ngunit namangha ako sa aking nakita nang tuluyang mabuksan at tumambad sa akin ang laman ng aparador.

Maayos na nakasabit ang kaygagandang damit na may iba't ibang kulay, magkakasunod ang laki, at may mga buhay na buhay na burda. Maraming mga nakaikid na sinulid at kahon sa ibaba.

Nang binuksan ni Nanay ang unang kahon, nakita ko ang kay daming karayom na iba't iba ang laki. At nang binuksan ang isa pang kahon ay sumambulat sa akin ang kay daming larawan. Inisa-isa ko ang mga larawan. At sa bawat larawan na tingnan ko, nandoon ang isang batang suot ang mga damit na isinuot ko 'nung ika-pitong kaarawan ko, 'nung Linggo ng Wika, 'nung ako'y magkumunyon at sabitan ng medalya. Hindi ako nakatiis. Tinanong ko si Nanay kung sino ang batang nasa larawan.

"Hulaan mo. Hindi mo ba nakikilala?" ang sabi lang ni Nanay sa akin sabay kindat at pumustu-pustura pa.

HINDI ko talaga mahulaan kung sino ang batang nasa larawan. Pumustu-pustura uli si Nanay at ginaya pa ang posing ng bata sa larawan.

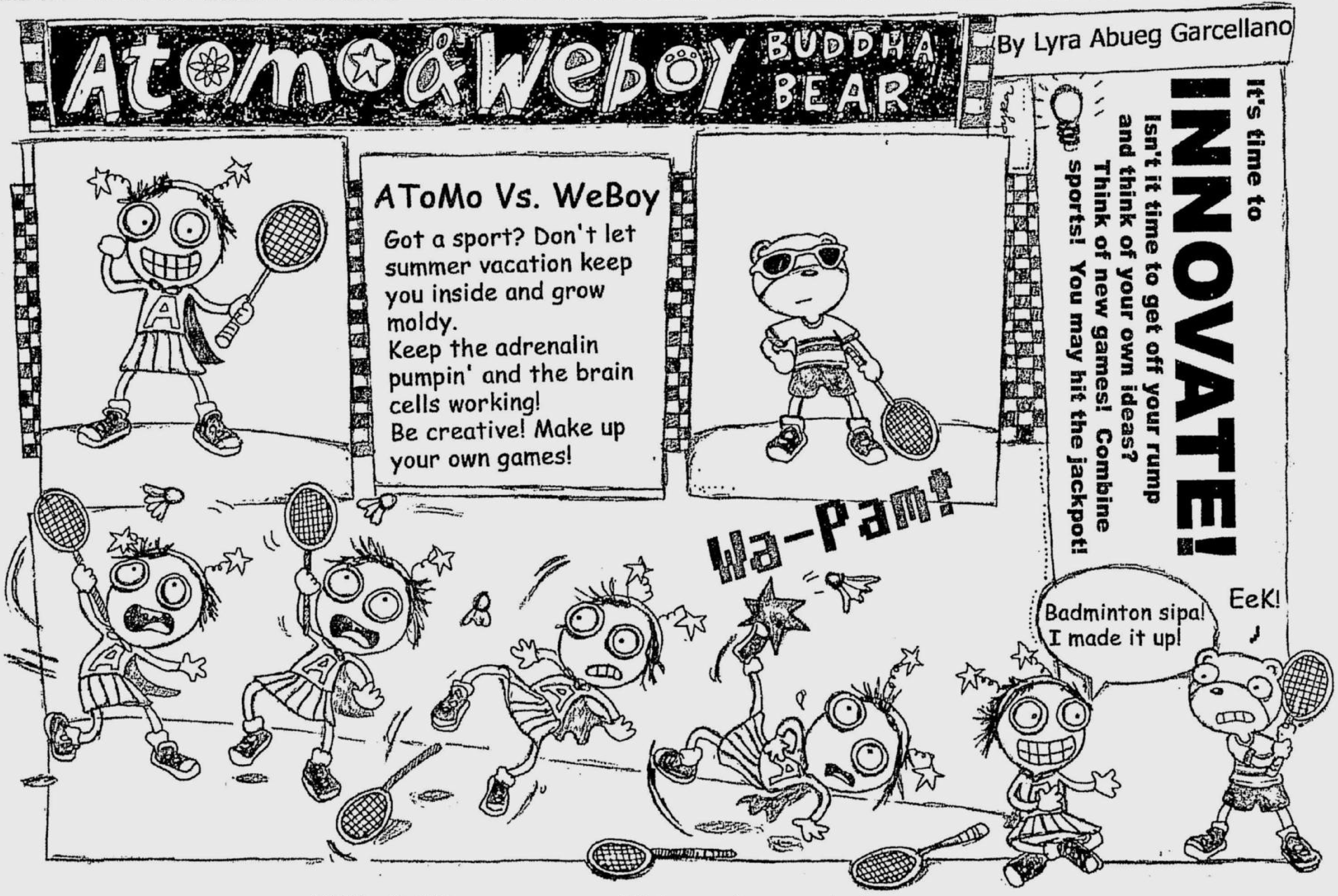
"Ay! Oo nga!" laking gulat ko. Si Nanay ang nasa larawan, ang may suot ng mga magagandang damit na isinuot ko. Hindi maubos ang tawanan namin ni Nanay.

Pakiramdam ko, kahit di ko naabutan si Lola Dominga, kilalang-kilala niya ako, dahil lapat na lapat sa akin ang mga damit na tinahi niya para kay Nanay. Bigla akong nasabik. Sana sumapit na ang aking ika-labingwalong kaarawan.

Mula noon, sa tuwing madaraan ako at magsasalamin sa luma at kulay-putik na aparador, lagi kong naaalala ang magaling na mananahi at magbuburda kong Lola, ang aking Lola Dominga.

*Si **Genaro** ay tubong Bulacan. Nag-aaral siya ngayon ng MA Malikhaing Pagsulat (Filipino) sa Ateneo de Manila University. Giniba na ang kanilang lumang bahay at tanging natitira na lamang ay ang lumang aparador na magpahanggang ngayo'y kanyang damitan. Maaari kayong sumulat sa kanya sa makata24@lycos.com.*

*Si **Yasmin** ay isang freelance illustrator at graphics designer. Mahilig siyang gumuhit, tumugtog ng piano, magsagwan, at kumain ng nachos.*


Atomo & Weboy
BUDDHA BEAR
By Lyra Abueg Garcellano
ATOMO Vs. WeBoy
Got a sport? Don't let summer vacation keep you inside and grow moldy.
Keep the adrenalin pumpin' and the brain cells working!
Be creative! Make up your own games!
It's time to INNOVATE!
Isn't it time to get off your rump and think of your own ideas?
Think of new games! Combine sports! You may hit the jackpot!
Wa-Pam!
Badminton sipa! I made it up!
EeK!

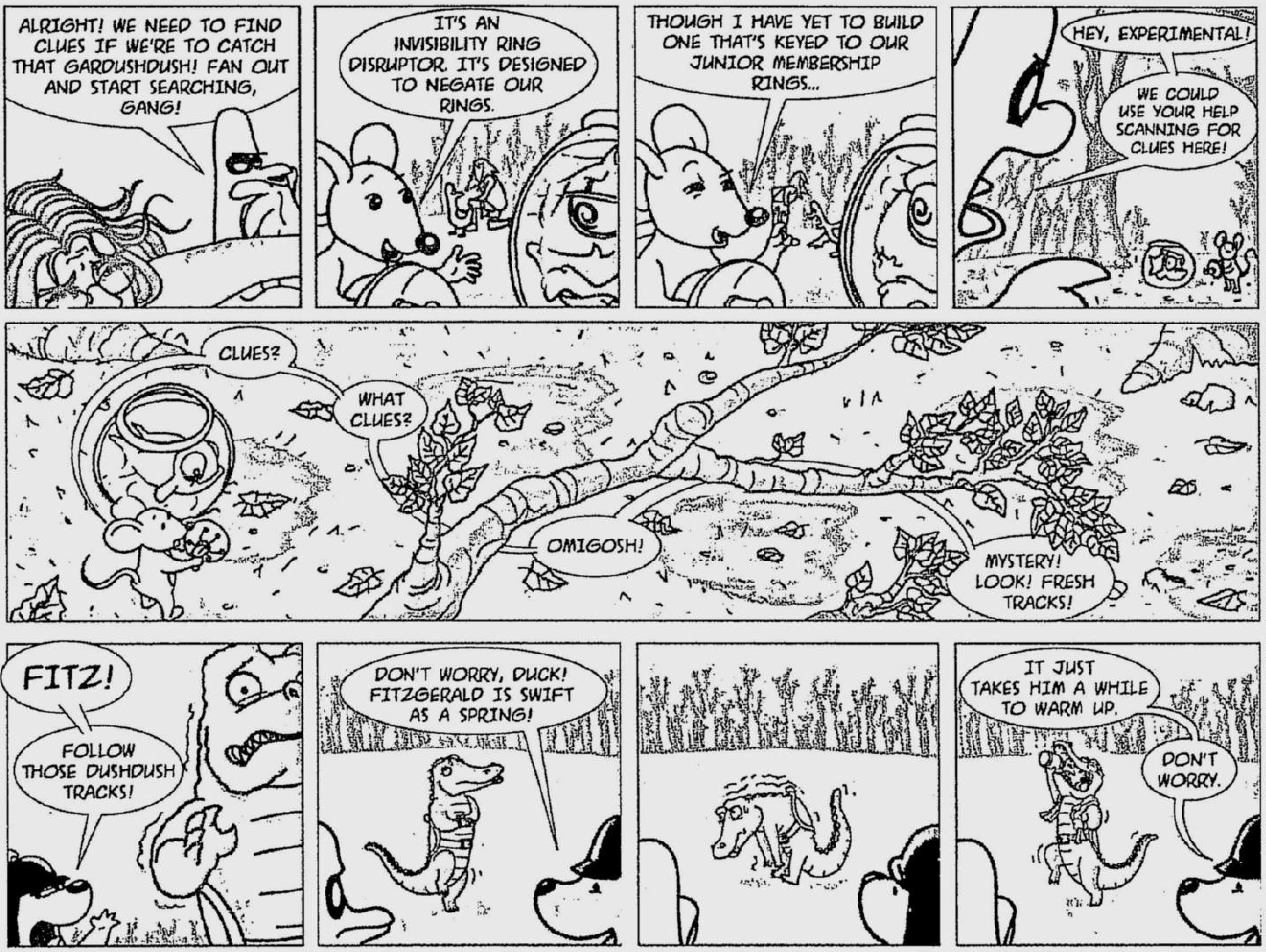
SHIRLEY'S PETS

Previously in Shirley's Pets Mystery Duck's Entry:

Pancho's group has taken my team's membership rings. These rings have the power to render its bearers invisible when humans are near.

Deprived of our rings, we were unexpectedly revealed to Shirley. Pancho, in the meantime, began to gloat as his gang vanished from sight. They were shortly rendered visible again by a device which Experimental brought to the scene.

Now the search for Sinatra and the Gardushdush begins.


ALRIGHT! WE NEED TO FIND CLUES IF WE'RE TO CATCH THAT GARDUSHDUSH! FAN OUT AND START SEARCHING, GANG!
IT'S AN INVISIBILITY RING DISRUPTOR. IT'S DESIGNED TO NEGATE OUR RINGS.
THOUGH I HAVE YET TO BUILD ONE THAT'S KEYED TO OUR JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP RINGS...
HEY, EXPERIMENTAL!
WE COULD USE YOUR HELP SCANNING FOR CLUES HERE!
CLUES?
WHAT CLUES?
OMIGOSH!
MYSTERY! LOOK! FRESH TRACKS!
FITZ!
FOLLOW THOSE DUSHDUSH TRACKS!
DON'T WORRY, DUCK! FITZGERALD IS SWIFT AS A SPRING!
IT JUST TAKES HIM A WHILE TO WARM UP.
DON'T WORRY.

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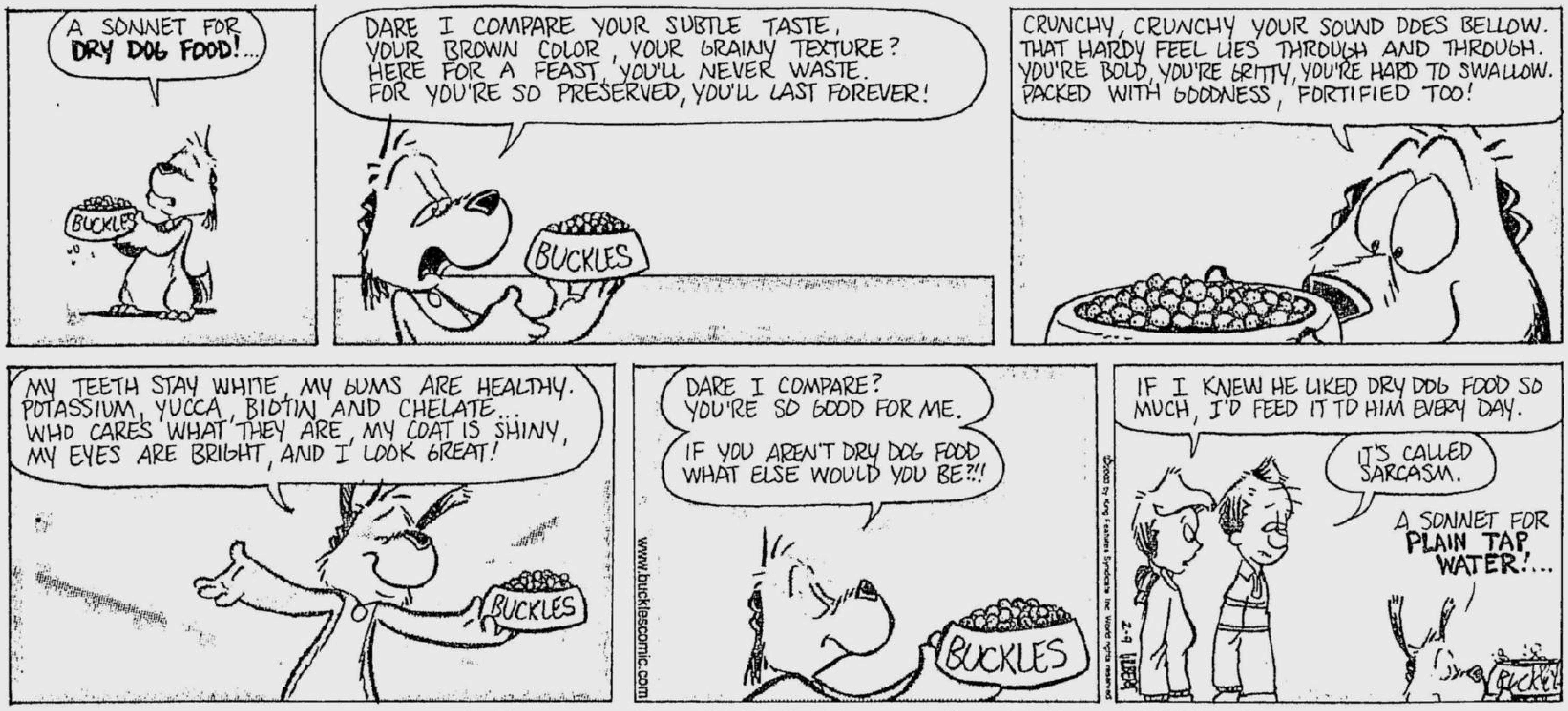
BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


A SONNET FOR DRY DOG FOOD!...
BUCKLES
DARE I COMPARE YOUR SUBTLE TASTE, YOUR BROWN COLOR, YOUR GRAINY TEXTURE? HERE FOR A FEAST, YOU'LL NEVER WASTE. FOR YOU'RE SO PRESERVED, YOU'LL LAST FOREVER!
BUCKLES
CRUNCHY, CRUNCHY YOUR SOUND DOES BELLOW. THAT HARDY FEEL LIES THROUGH AND THROUGH. YOU'RE BOLD, YOU'RE GRITTY, YOU'RE HARD TO SWALLOW. PACKED WITH GOODNESS, FORTIFIED TOO!
MY TEETH STAY WHITE, MY GUMS ARE HEALTHY. POTASSIUM, YUCCA, BIOTIN AND CHELATE... WHO CARES WHAT THEY ARE, MY COAT IS SHINY, MY EYES ARE BRIGHT, AND I LOOK GREAT!
BUCKLES
www.bucklescomic.com
DARE I COMPARE? YOU'RE SO GOOD FOR ME.
IF YOU AREN'T DRY DOG FOOD WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU BE?!!
BUCKLES
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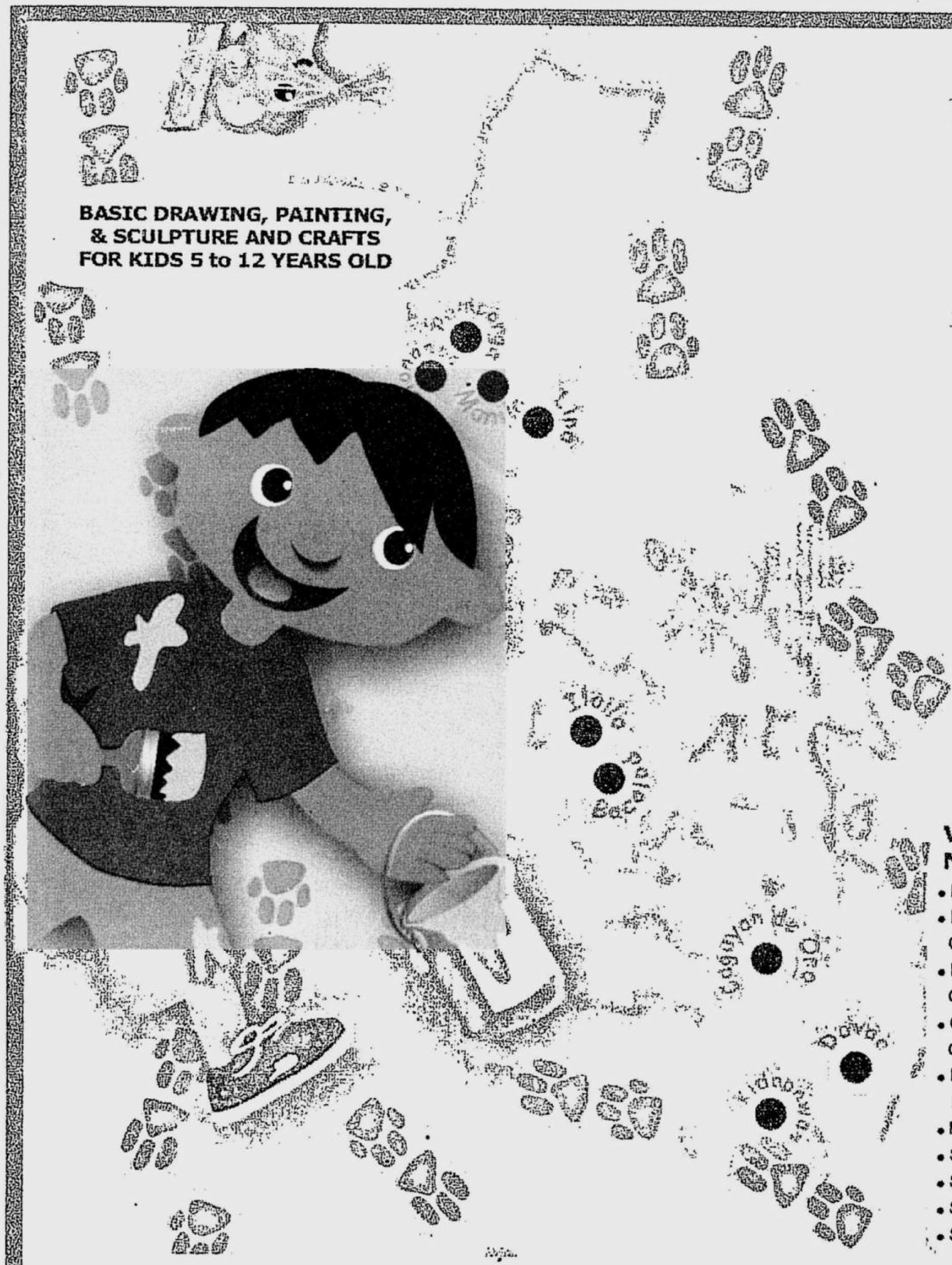
2-9 GILBERT
IF I KNEW HE LIKED DRY DOG FOOD SO MUCH, I'D FEED IT TO HIM EVERY DAY.
IT'S CALLED SARCASM.
A SONNET FOR PLAIN TAP WATER!...
BUCKLES



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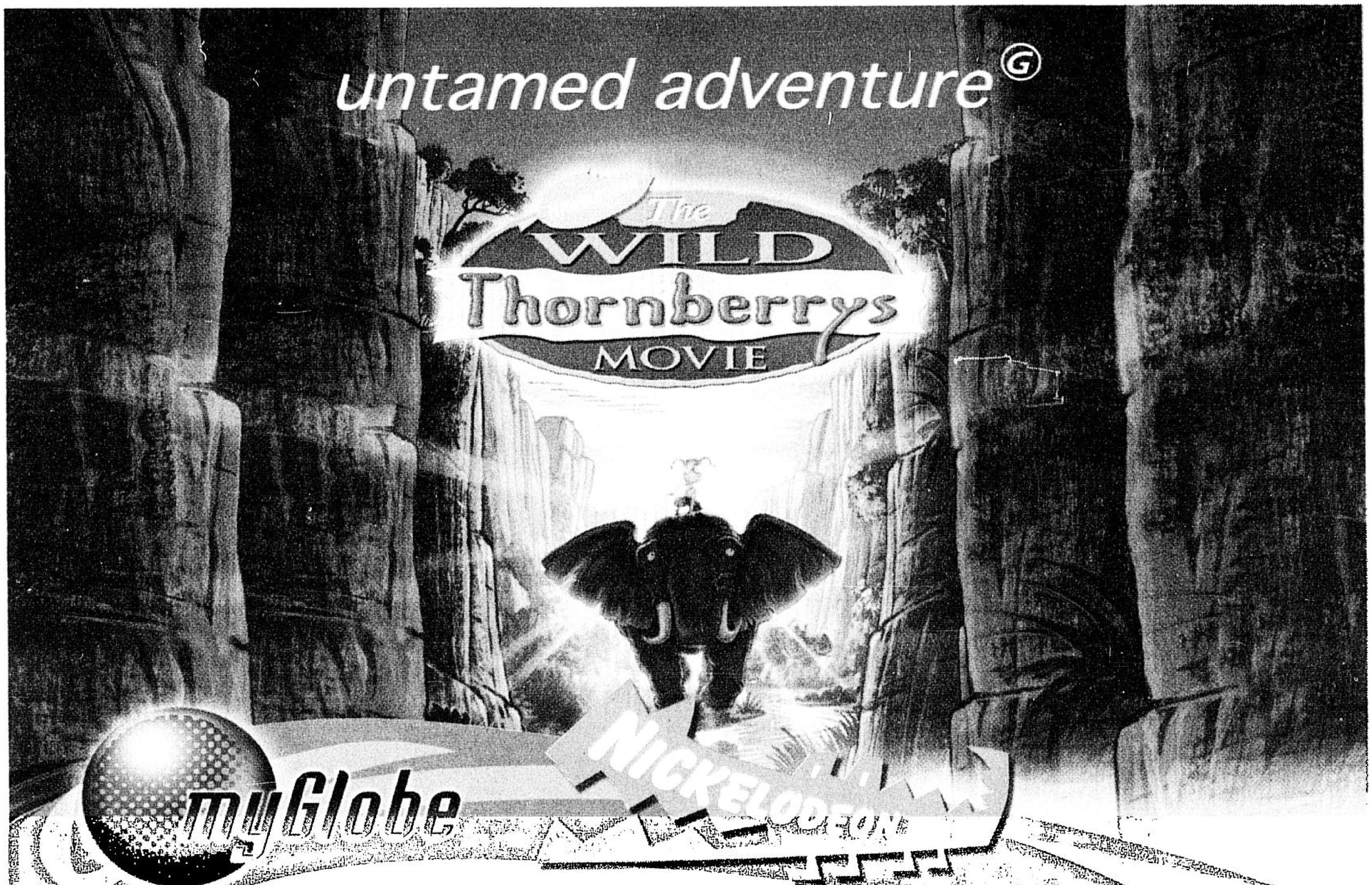

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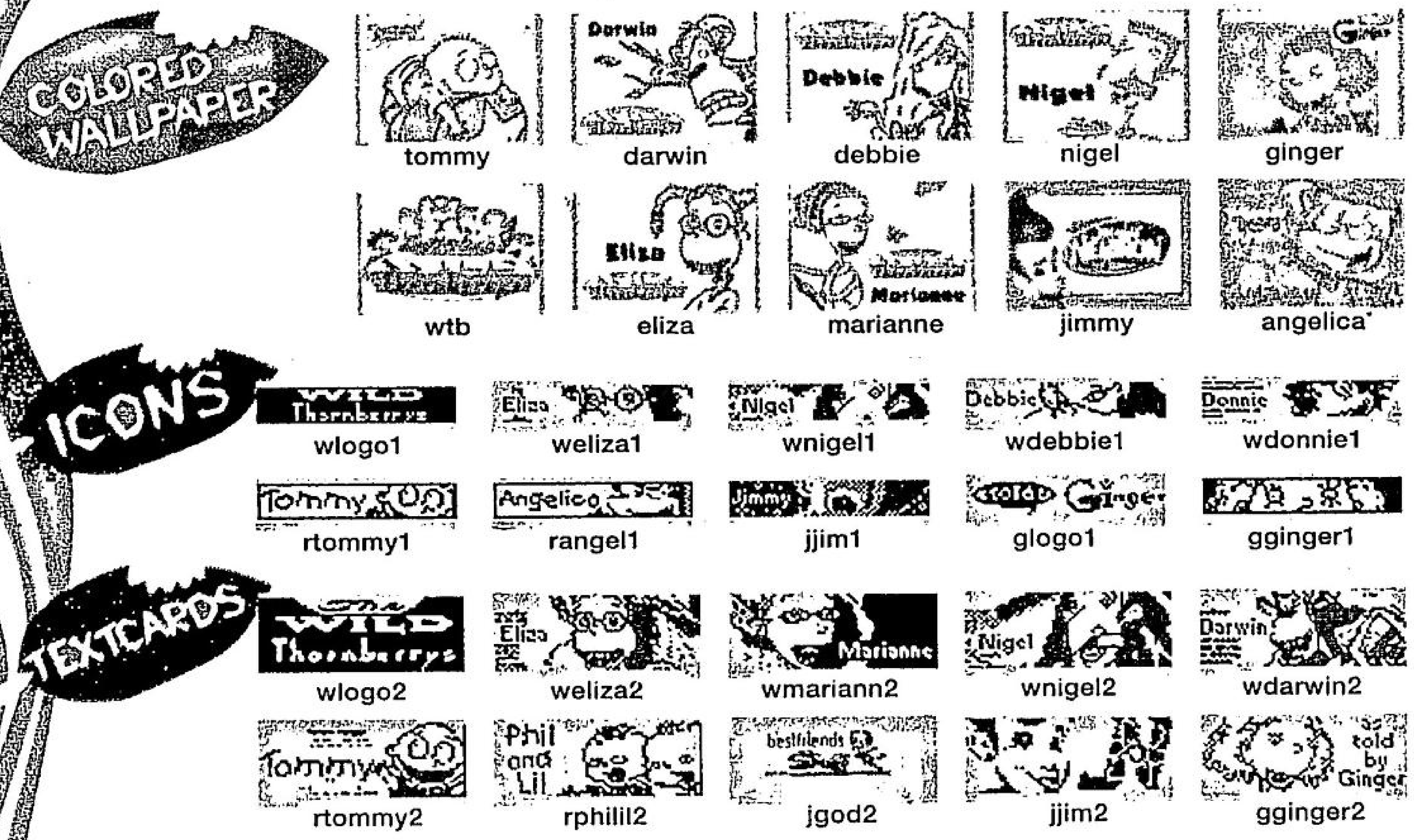

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